L'Autre en Mouvement: Representations of the Postcolonial Urban Other in Contemporary French Art, Literature and Cinema

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Abstract

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The official representation of the Other (formerly the colonized, today the first- and second-generation immigrant) in French media is fixed in terms of gender, race and ethnicity and part of a larger national identity building process. This dissertation aims to reveal a pattern of resistance in contemporary literary and film depictions of the Metropolitan urban Other, one that privileges expressions of mobility and fluidity in relation to gender and sociocultural norms. This work is composed of three chapters relating to the fields of museology, literature and film. The study of the three archives exposes varying degrees of media control in each artistic domain and, conversely, a discourse of dissidence in postcolonial works that seeks to redefine the concepts of spectatorship, gender norms, and urban identity in contemporary Metropolitan France.

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Introduction

Le Divers, qui n'est pas le chaotique ni le stérile, signifie l'effort de l'esprit humain
vers une relation transversale, sans transcendance universaliste.
Le Divers a besoin de la présence des peuples, non plus comme objet à sublimer,
mais comme projet à mettre en relation.
Le Même requiert l'Être, le Divers établit la Relation.[1]

Edouard Glissant, *Le Discours antillais*.

The institutionalized image of the Other (first- and second-generation immigrant) in France, fixed in terms of gender and race, is not only inaccurate but also ahistorical and as such, is being challenged by contemporary Metropolitan artists. This movement of resistance intensified at the time of French President Nicolas Sarkozy's concurrent opening of a Ministry of Immigration (the Ministère de l'Immigration, de l'Intégration, de l'Identité Nationale et du Développement Solidaire) and a Museum of Immigration, the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration (CNHI) in 2007. Both events prompted Martiniquan authors Edouard Glissant and Patrick Chamoiseau's publication of their manifesto "Les Murs" against the notion of a set "Other" identity in France based on colonial characterizations.[2] Following Glissant and Chamoiseau's incentive, a movement of intellectual resistance arose from the postcolonial Francophone sphere against the strict denomination of the non-French broadcasted by the Sarkozy government.

This interdisciplinary dissertation examines the progression and the current state of postcolonial artistic resistance against official representations of Otherness in France in three distinct chapters concerning museum studies, literature, and cinema. Each chapter investigates alternative discursive spaces inspired by the drifting patterns of first- and second-generation immigrants within the French urban sphere. This research ultimately seeks to reveal the artistic production of an interconnected neo-urban identity for the Other: through the deconstruction and

reappropriation of the art medium, revolutionary works ranging from the Negritude movement to the recent *film choral* genre have contributed to a global artistic expression of Glissant's interconnected *Relation*. This fragmentation of the art form is best exemplified in the dichotomy between the fixed representation of the Other displayed at the CNHI and the shifting image of immigration revealed in novels by Nina Bouraoui and Nora Hamdi, and in the films of Michael Haneke, Abdellatif Kéchiche and Djinn Carrénard. Their fluid representations of the posturban Other is *in movement*, constantly unfolding and thus challenging the fixed gender and ethnic constructs of postcolonial Otherness in France.

My work is inspired by the case of Sarah Baartman and the 2010 rendition of her story, *Vénus Noire*, by French-Tunisian filmmaker Abdellatif Kechiche. Sarah Baartman was a South-African slave who was brought to Europe in 1810 and exhibited for her exacerbated feminine physique.[3] After her death in 1815, French scientist Georges Cuvier dissected her body: her brain and genitalia were exposed at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris until 1976. In *Vénus Noire,* Kechiche reappropriated the fragmentation of Baartman's body and image and denounced the colonial origins of today's fixed image of the Other in the French society of the spectacle.[4] With *Vénus Noire*, Kechiche rehabilitated the story of Sarah Baartman along with the story of countless o/Other victims of colonization and its subsequent colonial imagery. This dissertation is thus based on the very dialectic between historically institutionalized fixity in the representation of the Other and the contemporary reappropriation and recasting of the Other's image in art, literature and film.

As this dissertation moves on to the literature realm with contemporary author Nina Bouraoui's redefinition of gender and cultural norms, and later on to the use of crossing narratives in the *film choral* genre, the relationship between these artists' productions and the

colonially infused notion of the spectacle remains an essential overarching argument. These artists effectively redefine the rules of the spectacle as their fragmented yet intersecting narratives unveil the existence of a common *tissu sensible* ("sensory fabric") as defined by Jacques Rancière in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009), binding the various communities of readers and spectators together under a shifting umbrella of identities.[5] Fluidity as expressed through the tropes of mobility and redefined gender norms serves to connect these identities at strategic intersections, revealing a wider network of social relations than the one conveyed in the constraining structures of the official museological, literary and cinematic realms.

The geographical and thematic focus of this dissertation is the city of Paris. The French capital has been recognized in critical theory as a central hub of migration and transit, and, along the lines of Michel Foucault's Panopticon model, a city with a clear division between its center and periphery.[6] Principally and for the purpose of this dissertation, Paris is home to the oldest and most grandiose French museums, from the Musée du Louvre to the Musée d'Orsay, and alternatively the more recent Musée du Quai Branly and Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, both Presidential creations and, as such, integrant parts of this dissertation's argument. While sizeable *banlieues* are found on the border of other French cities such as Lyon and Marseilles, it is in the Parisian vicinity that the majority of *banlieue* film narratives are set, as well as most narratives in contemporary Metropolitan literature.

1) Art(s) and Politics in Postcolonial France

The rapport between arts and politics in modern France is twofold. Art has been and is still used today via sociocultural institutions such as museums, literature, or public media, as a means to convey a certain idea of French society; conversely, film and literature have the ability to disrupt the broadcasting of French cultural norms in the form of propaganda and manifestos.

In Althusserian (and by extension Marxist) terms, these three art forms are commonly used as Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). For Althusser, the State exercises its power over society by means of Repressive State Apparatuses (the police force and the prison system) and Ideological State Apparatuses such as the church, the media, and the arts to maintain the broadcasting of a unified ideology.[7] The CNHI in Paris, whose official mission is to "give to the widest audience possible the access to two centuries of immigration in France, and to thus contribute to a change in consideration and opinion on immigration," is therefore considered in this dissertation an institutionalized teaching center for the masses, or in Althusserian terms, an Ideological State Apparatus.[8]

In *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*: *Decolonization and The Reordering of French Culture* (1995), Kristin Ross unveils the dialectic role that cinema and literature played as ISAs in the modernist cultural revolution that followed the end of the Second World War in France. Modernizing France meant on one hand the promotion of American ideals regarding mobility and consumerism, and on the other the exclusion of immigrants from the city center.[9] In Paris, the sociocultural needs to overcome the atrocities of the war were met with a great American cleaning and modernizing trend, a result of the agreements signed under the Marshall plan. The removal of Others from the city center was deemed essential to the revival of the French capital and its entrance in the modern era, turning modernization into "a *means* of social, particularly racial, differentiation" (11). The ghettoization of postcolonial Others in Paris fixated these now *banlieue* populations in a pre-modern state and identity in regards to the French republican ideals. Their exclusion from Paris proper reduced their access to mobility and speed, and engendered a lack of representation of Otherness in French cinema and literature, at the time devoted to rebuilding the French national identity.

Ross further demonstrates the ambivalent role of art in this modernization process, focusing on cinema and its promotion of the car industry in France: "…just at the very moment that the car in France is poised to become commonplace, an object of mass consumption, the cinema helps produce a myth or ideology of the car's auratic singularity" (33). Cinema developed drastically after the Second World War and became the symbol of modernity through its display of movement and speed. Ross explains: "Surely the intensification of the two burgeoning technologies, acting in tandem, would produce a qualitative acceleration in panoramic perception; for both cars and movies create perception-in-movement. The automobile and the motion it creates become integrated into the driver's perception: he or she can only see things in motion – as in motion pictures" (39). The immutable bond between the nature of the art form and the sociological revolution it represented continued beyond the twentieth century. Cinema in conjunction with the use of transportation in its narratives has been appropriated by contemporary artists as the preferred means to display movement in relation to neo-urban identities, as investigated in Chapter III of this dissertation.

Dominic Thomas' research in *Africa and France: Postcolonial Cultures, Migration and Racism* (2013) has revealed the dialectic between arts and politics in terms of ethnicity and identity in twenty-first century France. Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency from 2007 to 2012 marked a resurgence of colonial and divisive discourses in the French cultural sphere. Elected at a time of mismanagement of *banlieue* violence in France, his politics veered towards the total exclusion of immigrants from the center, and towards the "chacun chez soi." Starting with the 2005 *banlieue* riots and Sarkozy's appointment as Minister of the Interior, France has seen a restructuring of the Other's image in official media, as he repeatedly expressed his discontent with the *banlieue* and its inhabitants.[10] The contemporary Other, the first- and second-generation

immigrant, has since then been fixed in the public eye in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender, according to standards formerly attributed to the colonized.

In *Africa and France*, Thomas gathers under the term "Sarkozy's Law" all of former French president Nicolas Sarkozy's actions on the political and artistic scenes that led to a further *banlieue* crisis and consequently an irreparable ethno-cultural schism in multicultural France. Thomas denounces Sarkozy's forceful use of the media to broadcast his separatist ideas as a "manipulation of public opinion [that] has served to justify the toughening of border control mechanisms and the introduction of new legislation" (63). Sarkozy's similarly excessive use of the art media through the opening of the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration confirmed the existence of a grander ideological scheme. Thomas explains: "during Sarkozy's presidency (2007-2012), policies included a broad range of interconnected and interaligned operations between various ministries … Foremost among Sarkozy's initiatives was a concern with French history and French national identity; in other words, with the preservation of "patrimony" and with a definition of "memory" (3). As previously mentioned, this endeavor stirred controversy among politics and intellectuals alike, as it breached the fields of history, politics, and ideology.[11]

Dominic Thomas further cites the "National Identity Debate" as another of Sarkozy's weapons in his ethnically-driven battle against immigration, a "debate" that truly reflected his government's denial of France's multiculturalism along with a longing for a pre-migration, unique French identity.[12] Etienne Balibar in *We, the People of Europe: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (2004) has termed this resurgence of colonial ideals via public policies of separation and exclusion the "recolonization" of immigration:

> The first [part] is the persistence of administrative methods and habits acquired during contact with "indigenous" populations, which… were reintroduced and "naturalized" in the Metropole…Next there is the continuity of currents of migration of labor, which follow paths established during the colonial period…

> Finally there is the significance of a discourse of imperial unification in which… the notions of assimilation and differentiation do not exclude one another but rather form a hierarchy analogous to that of the universal and the particular, or the public and the private. (Balibar 39)

In response to the "identité-unique" proposed by the Sarkozy government –an identity imbued with colonial imagery and conveyed in official media as propaganda – manifestations of fluidity in terms of identity, ethnicity, gender roles and urban geography have become more prominent in contemporary Metropolitan literature and film, confirming Edouard Glissant's claim to the existence and progression of an *identité-relation* in postcolonial France. This disruptive notion of fluidity is itself "packaged" under curatorial, publishing and cinematographic techniques themselves altered in order to best display the contemporary notions of postethnicity and *identité-relation*.

2) Postethnicity and *Identité-relation*

Glissant defined the key concept of *identité-relation* in "Poétique de la Relation" (*Le Discours Antillais*, 1989) as an essentially Caribbean phenomenon, one that is intrinsically linked to that of *métissage* ("creolization"): "Le métissage en tant que proposition n'est pas d'abord l'exaltation de la formation composite d'un peuple: aucun peuple en effet n'a été préservé des croisements raciaux. Le métissage comme proposition souligne qu'il est désormais inopérant de glorifier une origine "unique" dont la race serait gardienne et continuatrice" ("Creolization as an idea is not primarily the glorification of the composite nature of a people: indeed, no people has been spared the cross-cultural process. The idea of creolization demonstrates that henceforth it is no longer valid to glorify "unique" origins that the race safeguard and prolongs" 250, Dash 140). To the unnatural *Relation* forced by the colonizer onto the Other,[13] Glissant proposes the reality of Antillanité and its "multi-relation:" "Si nous parlons de culture métissées (comme l'antillaise

par exemple), ce n'est pas pour définir une catégorie en-soi qui s'opposerait par là à d'autres catégories (de culture "pures"), mais pour affirmer qu'aujourd'hui s'ouvre pour la mentalité humaine une approche infinie de la Relation, comme conscience et comme projet: comme théorie et comme réalité" (250).[14] The very notion of *Relation* is for Glissant a natural act that occurs when the paths of populations or individuals intersect and find their lives altered and enriched with each encounter. The creolization of populations is for Glissant an unavoidable consequence of the very nature of nomadic and international encounters, enhanced by the displacement of populations, itself rooted in the colonial era.

The multiplicity of intersections in the *Relation* phenomenon results in the realization of a vast and ever-expanding network of identities (*identité-relations*), one that on a global scale falls in line with the concept of "rhizomic identity" as defined by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *Rhizome* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1976).[15] In *Poetics of Relation* ("Errantry, Exile"), Glissant writes:

> Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari ont critiqué les notions de racine et peut-être d'enracinement … ils lui opposent le rhizome qui est une racine démultipliée, étendue en réseaux dans la terre ou dans l'air, sans qu'aucune souche y intervienne en prédateur irrémédiable. La notion de rhizome maintiendrait donc le fait de l'enracinement, mais récuse l'idée d'une racine totalitaire. La pensée du rhizome serait au principe de ce que j'appelle une poétique de la Relation, selon laquelle toute identité s'étend dans un rapport à l'Autre. (23)[16]

The reality of *identité-relation* and Rhizomic identities is for Glissant starkly opposed to the impossible idea of a unique French identity (or "identité-racine unique"), which in essence excludes the very history of colonization and the existence of migratory patterns within the "root" French identity.

Glissant further explains in *Traité du Tout-Monde:* "L'idée de l'identité comme racine unique donne la mesure au nom de laquelle ces communautés furent asservies par d'autres, et au

nom de laquelle nombre d'entre elles menèrent leurs luttes de libération. Mais à la racine unique, qui tue alentour, n'oserons-nous pas proposer par élargissement la racine en rhizome, qui ouvre Relation? Elle n'est pas déracinée: mais elle n'usurpe pas alentour" (21).[17] "L'identité-racine unique" in Glissant's work is a direct critique of the French national ideology that only recognizes as French those who possess a certain set of characteristics as exhibited, for example, in the discourse of the Ministère de l'Intégration et de l'Identité Nationale. The concept of *identité-relation* is thus posed, not as a modification of the "identité racine unique," but rather as an affixation to this monolithic root identity ("A l'Être qui se pose, montrons l'étant qui s'appose" 21).

In *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (2011), Fatima El-Tayeb reiterates the Glissantian notion of "identité-racine unique" and applies it to contemporary Europe as a whole.[18] Fatima El-Tayeb suggests that an international movement she terms as the "queering of identities" has been developing in Western Europe in opposition to governmentally-driven notions of national identity. Building on Etienne Balibar's notion of "postnationalism" in *We, The People of Europe*, El-Tayeb proposes that this queering of ethnicity, in a very similar way to the concept of *Relation*, effectively alters a nation's identity by destabilizing its fixed notion of nationalism:

> I use "queer" here as a verb rather than an adjective, describing a practice of identity (de)construction that results in a new type of diasporic consciousness neither grounded in ethnic identifications nor referencing a however mythical homeland, instead using the tension of living supposedly exclusive identities and transforming it into a creative potential, building a community based on the shared experience of multiple, contradictory positionalities. The new European minority activism demonstrates a queer practice by insisting that identity is unstable, strategic, shifting, and always performative. (xxxvi)

My argument on the nature of postcolonial urban Otherness in France is supported by both the Glissantian notion of *identité-relation* and El-Tayeb's concept of queered postethnicity.[19] In

addition, El-Tayeb furthers Glissant's purely ethnic and identitarian concept of *identité-relation* by including the notions of gender and sexuality as active components of nation-building and conversely queering identities in Europe, a topic I approach in Chapter II of this dissertation regarding ethnic and gender stereotypes in contemporary France.[20]

In *European Others*, Fatima El-Tayeb retraces the path of women of color activists in relation to the queering of ethnicity in the West, emphasizing their contributions to the contemporary diasporic identity that connects migrants and minorities. El-Tayeb's statement on the double Otherness from which women of color are suffering in the postcolonial era ("…the black subject had to reproduce the dialectic formation that reproduced him as Other by creating its own Other. Within the nationalist framework of dialectic discourse, subjectivity is coded male, and the black woman necessarily remains an "(un)subject"" 46) is echoed in Chapter II of this dissertation ("Postcolonial Women Writers, Gender Roles and the Paratext") and my study of the semi-institutionalization of immigrant women writers in France.

Supporting Audre Lorde's celebrated speech on the master's tools, El-Tayeb confirms: "In pushing beyond binary, essentialist notions of identity, women of color feminism initiated a shift in paradigms, lastingly shaping the search for methodological tools that allow for "fuzzy edges" and intersections rather than depending on the creation of boundaries, making possible the exploration of commonalities while paying close attention to specific circumstances" (48).[21] Building on El-Tayeb and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's notion of the subaltern, Chapter II places women of color as architects of an-Other identity for the Other woman in France. My research has shown that the literary devices used in their works tie lived experiences of the local with those of the global, and that an additional process of semi-institutionalization has enabled their expressions of alternative gender roles to reach a wider audience.

3) Inquiries

How has the persistence/ resurgence of colonial ideology impacted the realms of Metropolitan art, literature and film?

The resurgence of colonial ideology is in alignment with maintaining Others in an anti-modern, non-developing state, as explained by Kristin Ross in reference to the Situationists' concept of "the colonization of everyday life" (7).[22] In response to their increasing lack of control due to the growing presence of digital media in everyday life, and the consequential affluence of Other cultures and traditions in twenty-first century France, institutions in the domains of art, literature, and cinema have resorted to recycling the colonial ideology in terms of fixity and polarization of Otherness. The redefining of racial and cultural boundaries was most prominently exemplified in France during Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency in his opening of the Ministère de l'Immigration, de l'Intégration, de l'Identité Nationale et du Développement Solidaire and of the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration. The Cité was created with the intent of educating the crowds on the history of immigration in France. Presidential intrusions in the realm of museums are few but remarkable: even though the Musée National d'Art Moderne at the Centre Pompidou is most renowned for its particular architecture, Jacques Chirac's Musée du Quai Branly and Sarkozy's CNHI have been proven in several studies (Sally Price and Dominic Thomas among others) to be used as means to disseminate a strong colonial ideology to the greater public.

In literature, the place allocated to Francophone works remains second-tier to the main, "French" literature sphere. In Metropolitan bookstores, the oeuvres of Négritude founders Césaire, Senghor, and Damas or contemporary authors Alain Mabanckou, Calixthe Beyala or Yasmina Khadra are not placed alongside the canonic French literature of Zola, Hugo, Camus or

Sartre: they are commonly isolated on a separate shelf or display case and marked as "Francophone." This physical misplacement (or displacement) additionally transpires into the packaging of the book itself. Richard Watts in *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World* (2005) has demonstrated that the paratext (photos of the author on the book cover and dust jacket, prefaces, and postfaces) affixed to the text itself guides and influences the reader along the lines of an-"other" literature, making it accessible and attractive to the main French readership. Francophone texts are thus physically marked as Others and ethnicized in the way they are presented by the publishing houses. A novel by controversial Franco-Cameroonian author Calixthe Beyala (she was condemned for plagiarism in 1996) habitually bears on its back cover a headshot of the author, outlining her racial and gender differences to the reader, thus eclipsing the text itself before the reading process has even begun.

In cinema, two types of film coexist in terms of comforting or opposing the resurgent State-driven colonial ideology in twenty-first century France. Popular French movies, such as Jean-Pierre Jeunet's very successful *Le Fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain* (*Amélie* 2001), comfort their French and foreign audiences in their idea of a pristine Paris whereas *banlieue* cinema – as exemplified in Matthieu Kassovitz' *La Haine* (1995) – reveals outbursts of violence, interspersed amidst group (almost tribal, as opposed to individual) narratives of a dull, immobile and repetitive life in the *banlieue*.[23] Despite the clear contrast between picturesque *Amélie* and violent *La Haine* filmed in black and white, the same fixity in the representation of the Other in France surfaces in the two genres. In *La Haine*, Kassovitz did not leave much room for successful interactions or travels between the *banlieue* and the city-center, preferring to focus on the shabby conditions of the HLM (*Habitation à Loyer Modéré* "Low-Cost Housing"), the dullness and the rejection that characterizes *banlieue* life for youths of multiethnic descent. The

echoed fixity of the Other's image has crippled *banlieue* cinema, reinforcing the divide between stereotypical Frenchness in the center and Otherness on the outskirts, strengthening the *ligne infranchissable* ("uncrossable line") that separates Paris from its *banlieues*.

What are the concrete manifestations of resistance to the colonial ideology in curatorial, publishing, and cinematographic practices?

Artists such as filmmakers Abdellatif Kechiche and Michael Haneke are challenging the relationship between the spectacle – in their case, what is shown on screen – and the spectator (in this dissertation, the contemporary French audience). In an interview conducted at the time of the 2010 release of *Vénus Noire*, Kechiche expressed his desire to have an impact on the spectator, both physically and emotionally: "Soit il [le spectateur] finit par rejeter ce à quoi je veux le faire participer, soit cet épuisement l'oblige à un questionnement, à une réflexion sur ce que raconte le film" ("Either he [the spectator] ends up rejecting what I want him to partake in, or this exhaustion forces him to question things, to reflect on what the film is about" Tonet 8).

Contemporary Austrian filmmaker Michael Haneke – a Francophile whose films *Code Inconnu* (*Code Unknown* 2000) and *Caché* (*Hidden* 2006) comment on the themes of colonialism and immigration in France – expressed his intention to impact the spectator in similar terms in a 1996 interview with cineaste Amos Vogel: "My idol is Bresson. My films are polemical statements against the American "taking-by-surprise-before-one-can-think" cinema and its dis-empowerment of the spectator. It is an appeal for a cinema of insistent questioning in place of false because too quick answers, for clarifying distance in place of violating nearness. I want the spectator to think" (73). Through their attempted connection with their audience, Kechiche and Haneke effectively challenge the boundaries of the spectacle and become advocates of Jacques Rancière's notion of "emancipated spectatorship." In response to Guy

Debord's conception of the spectator as an empty receptacle that can be filled with colonialist or State-imbued propaganda (*La Société du spectacle*, 1967), Rancière in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009) induces the spectator with an active quality, the ability to participate, create and extend his own discourse as he is being subjected to the spectacle. This phenomenon is developed in Chapter III, "Movement in Ethni-City: Cinema of the Other and Identité-Relation," and considered as a demonstration of artistic resistance against the institutionalized fixity in the representation of the Other in France.

In curatorial practices

In reaction to the 1931 Exposition Coloniale in Paris, a Surrealist group composed of André Breton, Louis Aragon and Paul Éluard created a counter-exposition entitled *La Vérité sur les colonies* ("The Truth About The Colonies"). As revealed in Chapter I of this dissertation, the exhibit received very little attention from Parisian visitors who were more attracted to the grandiose displays of the Exposition Coloniale than to the very politically charged work of the Surrealists. The *Vérité* exhibitfailed at presenting its spectators with a simple message, and instead entrusted the visitor to create his own narrative as he wandered along the displays. The disconnected aspect of the exhibit left the visitors perplexed and unable to appreciate the Surrealist critique of colonialism, materialism, subjectivism, and nation-building narratives that were in full display at the grandiose Exposition Coloniale.[24] While the *Vérité* exhibit was unsuccessful at garnering attention due to its "Debordian" conception of the spectacle, it proved to be a milestone in the artistic and intellectual resistance movement against the superseding power of the State in the dissemination of the colonial ideology in France.

Curating the postcolonial is in and of itself a problematic endeavor. The postcolonial is not a finished product: it is happening, in movement, and therefore cannot be accurately

represented or narrated in the fixed displays of a museum. In addition, the CNHI in Paris has failed to give its visitors access to an objective history of immigration. It has instead successfully reinstated for its visitors the existence of an inescapable divide between an official idea of what is quintessentially French and an everlasting, antimodernist image of Otherness based on colonial principles. The very location of the CNHI, inside the former Musée des Colonies, shows a lack of sensitivity on the part of the French curatorial and governmental authorities, and at the same time demonstrates their melding of the notions of colonization and immigration into one vaguely defined notion of Otherness. Chapter I of this dissertation, "Human Displays in Paris: Historical Introduction," delves into the making of the Museum of the Other in France, its role in the current Parisian curatorial landscape and its impact within the wider nation-building narrative developed under the 2007-2012 Sarkozy presidency.

In literature

"Francophone" literature is indeed a literature that is born of, yet plagued by the history of colonialism. "Francophone" itself a colonial term, this literature *de langue française* remains trapped in the "non-French" realm because of its geographical displacement: Francophone authors are still considered as originating from outside the Metropole, even though the majority are second- or third-generation residents. Despite this rejection from the center, Francophone authors rejoiced in 2006 when a series of prestigious literary prizes were awarded to a number of *écrivains étrangers de langue française* ("foreign authors writing in French").[25] A manifesto entitled "Pour une littérature-monde en Français" ("Toward a World-Literature in French") and signed by established authors such as Tahar Ben Jelloun, Maryse Condé, and Edouard Glissant was published in the French newspaper *Le Monde* on March 15, 2007 advocating for the development and persistence of a "world-literature in French."[26] This manifesto was published

the same year as *Quand les murs tombent: l'identité nationale hors-la-loi?* (*Raze the Walls: The Case for Outlawing Nationalism*) by Patrick Chamoiseau and Edouard Glissant, in reaction to the opening of the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration. The years 2006-2007 therefore mark a clear onset in the Other's artistic resistance against the resurgence of a State-driven colonial and imperialist ideology in France.

The physicality of the text: language, literature and identity.

Long before the concurrent opening of the Ministry of Integration and of the CNHI, Martiniquan thinker Edouard Glissant had begun advocating for the multiplicity of languages, cultures, and identities that make up postcolonial France, and was known to be a strong opponent of the term "Francophone literature," as he expressed in *Poetics of Relation*: "Dans le contexte indéterminé de ce que l'on appelle la francophonie, l'idée apparemment simple était donc de considérer la langue française comme porteuse a priori de valeurs, par quoi elle eût pu aider à corriger les tendances anarchisantes des diverses cultures qui, entièrement ou partiellement, relèvent de son expression" (127).[27] The French language in itself, as supported by the supposedly untouched French literature realm, has been turned into an ideological marker of nationalistic superiority and pride: as such, its uniqueness would not allow any form of evolution or *métissage* as it is to remain a reflection of the past and a pillar of the French identity.

To preserve the exceptionality of the French language means to equally preserve a literature, an ideology, an identity and an ethnicity that are not to be tainted with the conflicting influx of postcolonial entities. Glissant further explains: "Autrement dit, cette langue aurait une fonction d'humanisation, qui serait inséparable de sa nature propre, et qui préserverait contre les précipitations d'une collectivisation abusive de l'identité" ("In other words, this language would have a humanizing function supposedly inseparable from its very nature, which would serve as

protection against the rash actions of an excessive collectivization of identities" 127, 113). Identity and ethnicity have become embodied through language and the text, turning Francophone literature into a symbol of divergence and resistance against a monolithic French identity that would not recognize the repercussions of colonization.

In *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*, Fatima El-Tayeb expands on this concept by applying it to the rest of the European Union and its abusing of the figure of the "migrant" as a scapegoat: "Migration gains a central position here by functioning both as a threat uniting the beleaguered European nations and as a trope shifting the focus away from the continent's unresolved identity crisis" (3). The French identity-building phenomenon as identified by Dominic Thomas (*Africa and France*) and Edouard Glissant has been echoed in other Western European (former colonizing) countries as a means to balance off the presence of the Other in their territories, while obliterating a possibly tainted responsibility regarding the history of colonization. El-Tayeb explains: "It seems that instead of reconceptualizing Europe in order to include them, the unification process creates a narrative that not only continues to exclude racialized minorities but also defines them as the very essence of non-Europeanness in terms that increasingly link migration to supposedly invincible differences of race, culture and religion" (3). The exclusion of Others for not belonging to the unique European identity and conversely their inclusion in the rhetoric of national identity are echoed in the French and Francophone literary spheres where one cannot survive without the o/Other. The old continent's "unresolved identity crisis" surfaces in the body of the text as well as the paratext in the semi-institutionalization of authors. This process is presented in Chapter II ("Postcolonial Women Writers, Gender Roles and the Paratext") as the gateway to artistic fluidity in compliance with the French cultural ideology of Otherness.

Physicality in writing through orality has become more common in Francophone literature as it has settled as a literature of resistance against the fixed notion of French literature. In *Traité du Tout-Monde*, Edouard Glissant stated about orality in writing: "L'éclat des littératures orales est ainsi venu, non pas certes remplacer l'écrit, mais en changer l'ordre. Écrire c'est vraiment dire: s'épandre au monde sans se disperser ni s'y diluer, et sans craindre d'y exercer ces pouvoirs de l'oralité qui conviennent tant à la diversité de toutes choses, la répétition, le ressassement, la parole circulaire, le cri en spirale, les cassures de la voix" (121).[28] Orality as a physical quality of the text is most remarkable in twentieth and twenty-first century texts that present an abnormal (against the norm) schematic of sexuality for the Other in France. Nina Bouraoui, French-Algerian author and openly lesbian, semi-autobiographically writes about discovering her own gender and sexual identity in *Garçon Manqué* (2000), and later about the difficulties of leading a gay lifestyle in Paris in *Poupée Bella* (2004). Her texts are marked by the use of orality in her writing, turning her text into a body that is crying out to be heard, while writing her own homosexual body into and within the text, as an expression of deliverance from the heavy cultural norms of her French-Algerian upbringing. Adding to the physicality of the text itself, her personal use of public media (blogs, websites, interviews) combined with a more Westernized and neutral paratext in the form of detachable book covers have enabled her narratives to break through the walls of gender and ethnic fixity in France.

In cinema

In the early years of the twenty-first century, different representations of Otherness have surfaced in what I term the "Cinema of the Other" and the evolving genre of "film choral" (also known as "film mosaïque"). In *Reframing Difference: Beur and Banlieue Filmmaking in France* (2005), Carrie Tarr considers the turn of the millennium "a crucial period for competing

representations of the *banlieue*, race relations and national identity," which coincides with a period of reactions to then Minister of the Interior Nicolas Sarkozy's severe words and regulations regarding the *banlieue*.[29] The once rigid *banlieue* cinematography has turned towards representations of movement and fluidity in the works of Claire Denis, Abdellatif Kechiche, and more recently, Géraldine Nakache and Djinn Carrénard, in expanding the narratives outside of the constricting space of the *banlieue* and into the center, Paris. This neo-urban genre's representations of physical and identitarian mobility are facilitated by the use of contemporary means of communications (cell phones and the internet, wireless as opposed to ground technologies, therefore inducing fluidity), and public transportation such as the metro, taxis, and the RER (Paris' regional train). The directors studied in Chapter III ("Movement in Ethni-City: Cinema of the Other and Identité-Relation") have turned the trope of movement into an integrant part of their narratives (and their protagonists' lives), thus breaking through the fixity of the Other's representation in French and *banlieue* cinema.

In contrast with Denis, Kechiche and Nakache's productions which are rather widely distributed in French cinema, "guerilla filmmaking" has made a breakthrough with Djinn Carrénard's quintessential film choral *Donoma* (2011), whose means of production and cinematic techniques have revealed the established resistance of a French urban postethnic community in filmmaking practices. Carrénard himself embodies the "Tout-Monde" Glissant and Chamoiseau have been advocating for. Born in Haiti in 1981, he moved to Togo and Guyana before establishing himself in Paris. His cinematography is comprised of a series of short films, including *White Girl in her Panty* (2009) shot with a Franco-American cast and crew in New York City as a prequel to his first feature *Donoma*. This "guerilla film" was supposedly produced with a budget of 150 euros and promoted by the actors themselves during the 2011 "Donoma

Tour." A large part of the film's promotion was executed via online networks, most notably through posts on Carrénard's Facebook page. *Donoma* received support from the ACID (Association du Cinéma Indépendant pour sa Diffusion), a non-profit organization created by a group of filmmakers to finance and promote independent film.[30] The ACID has supported, among others, Claire Denis' *Nénette et Boni* (1996), Eric Zonca's *La Vie rêvée des* anges (1998), Philippe Faucon's *Samia* (2000), Yamina Benguigui's *Inch'Allah Dimanche* (2001), Zaïda Ghorab-Volta's *Jeunesse Dorée* (2001), and Rabah Ameur-Zaimeche's *Wesh Wesh Qu'est-ce qui se passe?* (2001), all movies depicting the Other side of the dominant French culture.[31] Following an analysis of Michael Haneke's choral film *Code Inconnu*, *Donoma* is discussed at length in Chapter III as the most recent installment of *identité-relation* on the contemporary Metropolitan art scene.

4) Chapter Description

Chapter I - Human Displays in Paris: Historical Introduction

This chapter serves as an introduction to the institutionalized one-dimensional image of the Other in France, a fixed representation of gender and ethnicity that has been culturally disseminated in Parisian museums since the nineteenth century and the display of Sarah Baartman's body at the Musée de l'Homme. Sarah Baartman (known as "Vénus Noire" or "Black Venus") was sent to Europe from South Africa to be exhibited in salons for her peculiar physical traits. She was first displayed in England by her Dutch master Caezar and then in Paris by wild animal exhibitor Réaux. She is believed to have died of syphilis in Paris where she had become a prostitute. After her death in 1815, her remains (her brain and genitalia along with a plaster cast of her body, the work of French scientist Georges Cuvier) were exhibited in Paris until 1976, until they were finally repatriated to her home country in 2002 after South African

President Nelson Mandela demanded their return. Chapter I includes an analysis of French filmmaker Abdellatif Kechiche's *Vénus Noire* (2010), a fictional rendition of the life and death of Sarah Baartman. In this section entitled "The Voyeur/Vue Dialectic: Mise-en-Scène and Mise-en-Abîme in the Spectacle de l'Autre," I discuss Guy Debord's theory on the spectacle (*La Société du Spectacle*) in regards to Kechiche's film, and I question the director's function and ambition in reproducing the exhibitor/exhibited dialectic to which Sarah Baartman was subjected during her lifetime and after her death. The study of *Vénus Noire* in this chapter bridges over to Chapter III and the notions of passive spectatorship (Debord) and active spectatorship (Rancière) in the Cinema of the Other.

The last section of Chapter I is dedicated to the Musée du Quai Branly (MQB), a museum dedicated to primitive arts, and the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration (CNHI).[32] In this section, I begin with the MQB as an example of the institutionalization of museums in France (President Jacques Chirac opened the MQB in 2006), expanding on Sally Price's *Paris Primitive: Jacques Chirac's Museum on the Quai Branly* (2007). Working from Patricia Morton's study of the 1931 Exposition Coloniale (*Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris*, 2000) and Panivong Norindr's work on nation-building curatorial practices in *Phantasmatic Indochina: French Colonial Ideology in Architecture, Film, and Literature* (1996), this section subsequently questions the relationship between the CNHI and the building in which it has been installed (the Palais de la Porte Dorée – formerly Musée des Colonies – the last remnant of the grandiose 1931 exhibit).

Chapter II – Postcolonial Women Writers, Gender Roles and the Paratext

Continuing on the notion of gender fixity and representation explored in Chapter I with the case of Sarah Baartman, this chapter is a study of the institutionalization of immigrant

women writers in France. Working from Gayatri Spivak's notion of strategic essentialism and her concept of the subaltern, this chapter begins with Jane and Paulette Nardal and their eclipsing from the founding of the Negritude movement. The Nardal sisters, who were active members of the first cohort of Martiniquan students in Paris, hosted a literary salon in Clamart (a posh Parisian suburb) where they envisioned a Pan-African project uniting Francophone and Anglophone thinkers in their critical study of colonialism. In addition, they created *La Revue du Monde Noir* in 1931 and published groundbreaking texts on the condition of Black men and women in *La Dépêche Africaine*, notably "Internationalisme Noir" by Jane Nardal. In "L'Eveil de la conscience de race chez les étudiants noirs," Paulette Nardal not only prefigured the Pan-African bond between the Negritude movement and Harlem Renaissance thinkers, she also begun a feminist movement for Antillean women in Paris, unveiling gender-based inequities inherited from the Martiniquan caste system. Her denunciation of this essentialist perspective was only reinforced by Léopold Senghor's poem *Femme nue, femme noire*, published in his 1948 in *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache*, along with his, Aimé Césaire and Léon-Gontrand Damas' self-identification as the Fathers of Negritude, leaving the Nardal sisters out of a movement they had in reality co-founded.

Chapter II further explores the fixed representation of postcolonial women writers in France through the figure of Suzanne Césaire. The paratext that surrounded her oeuvres emphasized stereotypically feminine functions while ultimately obliterating her revolutionary work on Antillanité, which prefigured Edouard Glissant's. In focusing on Daniel Maximin's reedition of Césaire's *Le Grand camouflage* (2009), this chapter demonstrates that the paratext in the form of photographs, book covers, and prefaces, is still used today as a way to categorize and fixate postcolonial women writers in the gendered roles of muse, sexual partner, and mother.

This section expands to the later years of the twentieth century and the case of French-Cameroonian author Calixthe Beyala, who was accused and found guilty of plagiarism after the publication of her popular novel *Le Petit prince de Belleville* (1992). This verdict affected her image in the media and in the paratext of her publications, as she became an embarrassment to the French literary institutions.

This chapter reveals the existence of an institutionalization process regarding immigrant women writers in the Metropole as the "Other women" of French literature. Their public image is either Westernized and conforming, or on the contrary, it is marked as defiant of the French republican ideals in order to focus the reader's attention on their gender and ethnic differences. Working from Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulations* (1981), Gérard Genette's *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1997), and Richard Watts' *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World* (2005), this last section suggests a further correlation between the nature of the paratext and the nature of the text as a form of disruption of gendered fixity in contemporary Metropolitan literature. Nina Bouraoui and Nora Hamdi are presented in this study as authors who are currently navigating this institutionalization process in conforming to the image of a tame and integrated "Other" writer while strategically using these neutral paratexts to reach a wider (not exclusively Other) readership.

Chapter III - Movement in Ethni-City: Cinema of the Other and Identité-Relation

Chapter III delves into the realm of cinematography and its critical function in the artistic representation of the Other *en mouvement* and additionally proposes a renegotiation of the terms established by Guy Debord in *La Société du spectacle* (1967). Following Jacques Rancière's work in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009), I suggest that the discourse of fluidity that surfaces in the contemporary Cinema of the Other promotes the activation of a *tissu sensible* ("sensory

fabric") among the spectators, turning them into active and cooperative participants according to their individual experiences. This redefined concept of spectatorship ultimately exposes the reality of Glissant's concept of *identité-relation* as well as Fatima El-Tayeb postethnic notion of "queered" – as opposed to monolithic and indivualistic – identities. Working from this predicate, this chapter first demonstrates how *banlieue* and *beur* cinema have failed to incorporate the spectator as an active participant of the film narrative, and have as a consequence remained fixed in terms of socio-urban space, gender roles and ethnicity. In addition to Debord, Rancière, Glissant and El-Tayeb, this section incorporates Carrie Tarr's *Reframing Difference: Beur and Banlieue Filmmaking in France* in conjunction with Situationists Michel de Certeau and Kristin Ross' theories on the conception of urban space.

Chapter III considers the increasing use of modes of transportation and communication in Claire Denis'*J'ai pas sommeil* (1994) and *35 Rhums* (2008) to be significant of the evolution of the Other in the cinematic urban space, following theories of movement developed by Paul Virilio in *Speed and Politics* (1977) and Marc Augé in *Un Ethnologue dans le métro* (1986). The proper use of speed and transportation is shown in contemporary Metropolitan films to lead to the creation of a network of identities following the lines of each individual's *trace* in the streets and metro stations of Paris. In the twenty-first century, the phenomena of urban fluidity and *identité-relation* have affected the film industry in the (re)production of the film choral or mosaic film genre (first explored in Claude Lelouch's 1981 *Les Uns les et les autres*). In the film choral, individual storylines meet at strategic times and intersections, irrevoquably affecting their protagonists and altering their perspectives after each encounter. This last section focuses on French-Austrian filmmaker Michael Haneke's *Code Unknown* (2000), and young French-Haitian "guerilla" director Djinn Carrénard (*Donoma* 2011).

Chapter I
Human Displays in Paris: Historical Introduction

In his essay "Will the Musée du Quai Branly show France the way to postcoloniality?" historian Herman Lebovics reflects on the nature of the liminal space created within the museum between the visitor and the exhibit, a space that exposes the fracture provoked by contemporary France's quest for a unified cultural identity. In observing the scattered displays of the Musée du Quai Branly (MQB), Lebovics notes:

> In attempting to make the elision from the colonial (real conquered peoples) to the postcolonial (their captive cultures) precisely by way of spectacle, the installations of the Musée du Quai Branly serve, to adapt Debord's words, 'as the visible negation of life, as a negation of [colonial and immigrant] life which has become visible' … museum visitors know that there is an untold story behind the striking work standing alone in the well-lit display case. Accordingly, here and there at the MQB we discover islands of anthropology. (109)

The *mise-en-scène* of the Other in postcolonial Parisian museums bears an ideological stigma that extends over two centuries from the display of Sarah Baartman, the Hottentot Venus, at the Musée de l'Homme (MH) starting in the early 1800s, to the creation of the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration (CNHI) in 2007. In the twentieth century, the openings of both the MQB and the CNHI have unveiled France's governmental struggles to enter a postcolonial framework. Lebovics' work extends to President Sarkozy's recent project of a Maison de l'Histoire, the "principal venue for the celebration of his idea of national culture," a project that has not been realized and is still opposed by historians (Bancel and Lebovics 2011).[33]

The display of the Other in Paris has over the years attracted both fascination and criticism from scholars as well as the general public. From the early nineteenth century and the controversial scientific study and exhibition of the Hottentot Venus to today's *Repères* exhibit at the CNHI, the exhibition process has eclipsed the body and personae of the Other in favor of his own image. Transfigured into his own signifier, the Other placed in a museum became

emblematic of the exotic, what was to be owned during colonial times and is to be observed as an external entity to the main sphere in postcolonial times. The prevalence of the Other's fixed image in Parisian culture has, in turn, exposed the processes of governmental intrusion into the arts, a phenomenon that appears most symbolically in the French capital, as it has remained through time the hub of cultural and political developments in France.

The particular case of the *Repères* exhibit at the CNHI – housed since October 2007 in the Palais de la Porte Dorée, formerly Musée des Colonies (MC), the only remnant of the 1931 Exposition Coloniale – gives us insight into the specific role official institutions have played in the display of the Other since the colonial era. In making the decision to install the CNHI in the Palais de la Porte Dorée, a grandiose structure whose outside murals display the benefits of France's colonizing mission, former Minister of Culture Jacques Toubon fueled the already ongoing debate about the concurring opening of the Cité and the establishment of a Ministère de l'Immigration, de l'Intégration, de l'Identité Nationale et du Développement Solidaire. "On ne saurait gérer un ministère de l'identité," wrote Caribbean authors Edouard Glissant and Patrick Chamoiseau in their manifesto *Les Murs* in response to the opening of the Ministère – one of Sarkozy's creations – in May of 2007.[34]

Glissant and Chamoiseau quickly became advocates of an urgent refocusing on the endangered notion of identity.[35] Their reaction to a renewed static image of the Other as produced and preserved by Sarkozy's Ministry of Immigration echoed the Surrealists' fight against the fixed representation of the colonized at the time of the 1931 Exposition Coloniale. In their manifestos "Ne visitez pas l'Exposition Coloniale" ("Do Not Visit the Colonial Exposition") and "Premier bilan de l'Exposition Coloniale" ("First Toll of the Colonial Exhibition") as well as in their counter-exhibit entitled *La Vérité sur les colonies* ("The Truth

About the Colonies"), Surrealists André Breton, Louis Aragon and Paul Éluard denounced the commodification of museum displays for the sake of state-driven colonial propaganda. In *La Vérité*, they removed the Other from the object position he held at the Exposition Coloniale and turned him into the subject of their counter-exhibit. Yet the Surrealist exhibit failed to rehabilite the Other within the French national consciousness. *La Vérité* was not only based on a separatist notion of identity that continued to put the Other on display, but it also acted as a conduit for the Communist party ideals, thus discursively contributing to the commodification of the Other's image.[36]

I argue in this chapter that the image of the contemporary Other in Parisian museums and that of the colonized in colonial times are two sides of the same coin. The fixed image of the colonized as it was displayed at the Exposition and in human zoos (naïve, uneducated, with a potential to serve) is echoed in today's permanent *Repères* exhibit on immigration at the CNHI. Whether in the photographs or artifacts displayed at the Cité, France's Others remain removed from the visitor's reality by a screen, a display case, the insurmountable wall that separates the object from the subject and thus creates the spectacle. While the colonized at the Exposition Coloniale was presented as an entity that could be owned, the immigrant at the CNHI is depicted as a separate entity in an otherwise unified French culture. The fixed negative image of the Other has, throughout the centuries, proved vital for the existence and broadcasting of a rigid idea of nationalism, one that Glissant and Chamoiseau have denounced in their writings.

This opening chapter explores the doubling of the Other's identity, focusing on the creation of an unalterable image of the Other in Paris, and observing the various displays of this image in museums dedicated to "arts premiers" (indigenous or "first" arts) and immigration. In this first chapter, I argue that the *mise-en-scène* of the Other in Paris stands at the very core of

the physical and identitarian fixity of his image in contemporary France's psyche, one that twenty-first century films and novels seek to deconstruct via the use of movement (as demonstrated in Chapter II and Chapter III). Official representations are used in Paris as aesthetic devices to promote a form of arrested image in time and space that has the effect of fixing the Other outside the center. In the case of the CNHI, the very act of building an exhibit around a phenomenon that is currently happening is a way to promote a spectacle from which the people at the center – the spectators – can separate themselves physically as well as psychologically. The various displays, combined with the very act of setting up immigration as being fixed in time and therefore worthy of its own museum, thus create a sense of alienation between the visitor and the actual immigration taking place outside of the museum. The liminal space between the spectacle and its visitors, between colonialism and immigration, between history and culture, is addressed and reconceptualized in contemporary cinema, notably through the artistic juxtaposition of spectacles, as seen in Abdellatif Kechiche's *Vénus Noire* (the recounting of the story of Sarah Baartman, a South African slave whose remains were displayed at the Musée de l'Homme from the time of her death in 1815 until 1976).[37]

This first chapter is built around two parts that will ensure our understanding of today's artistic phenomena built around movement. First, I investigate the production of the display of the Other, starting with an overview of the case of Sarah Baartman, the Hottentot Venus. This investigation covers the fascination of the French audience for the Other while exploring the concept of *mise-en-abîme* in the case of Baartman (the performance of spectacle within the actual performance – the film). This section is organized along two axes: Baartman's presentation (the *mise-en-scène* to which she was subjected during her lifetime) and her re/presentation (the 2010 fictional rendering of her story, *Vénus Noire*, by Abdellatif Kechiche).

The second part of this chapter, entitled "From the Musée des Colonies to the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration: Displaying the Other in Paris," focuses on the 1931 Exposition Coloniale in parallel with the current exhibit that is housed in the Palais de la Porte Dorée as an example of today's ongoing politics of fixity.

1) Displaying the Other: Creating the Fixed Image

a) Introduction to the case of Sarah Baartman

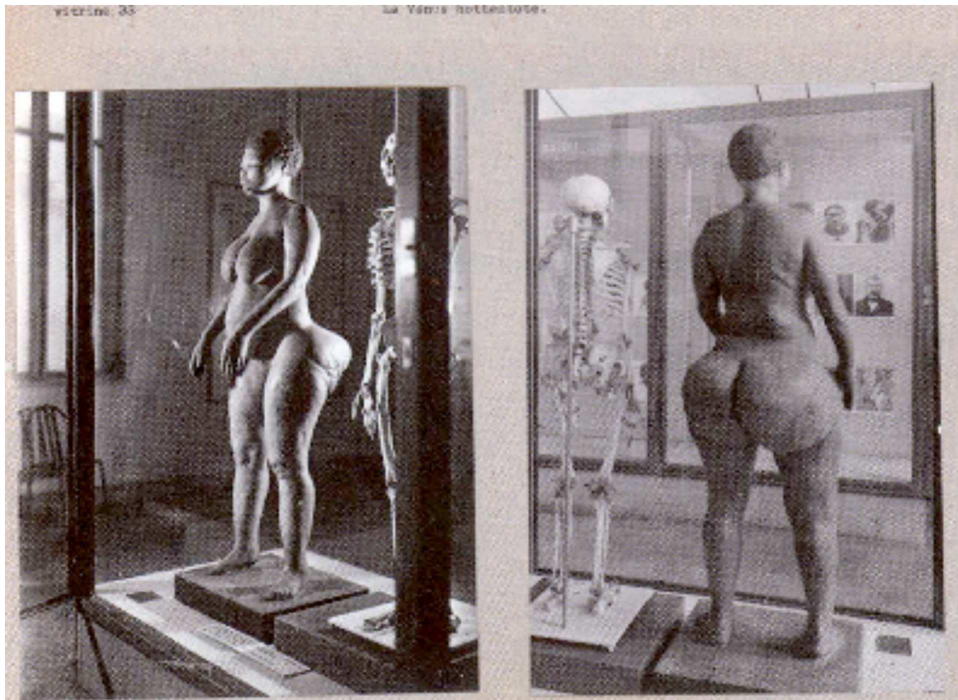
Sarah Baartman, known as the Hottentot Venus, symbolizes alone the peculiar relationship between science and the arts in France, between the production of a certain form of display and the type of audience it is intended for, as it appeared at the time of imperial conquests and emerging fascination with the Other. The actual disembodiment of the subject for the benefit of Western domination in the aesthetic and scientific realms literally turned Baartman into an *objet de curiosité* for the British and later French scientific community as well as common population.[38] It is Georges Cuvier's work, both when Baartman was alive and also after her death, that enabled the scientific community to transform the body of the South African woman into a symbol of Western superiority. In *Black Venus: Sexualized Savages, Primal Fears, and Primitive Narratives in French* (1999), Tracy Sharpley-Whiting explains: "Most nineteenth-century French spectators did not view her as a person or even a human, but rather as a titillating curiosity, a collage of buttocks and genitalia" (17).

In the early nineteenth century, Sarah Baartman (born Sawtche, renamed Saartjie Baartman, later baptized Sarah) was sent to London by Dutch settlers to be exhibited for her peculiar physical traits: her enlarged buttocks and genitalia were thought to be a definite trait of the Hottentot tribe. From 1810 to 1814, she was shown in England by her Dutch master Caezar and British settler Alexander Dunlop. In 1814 she was purchased by Réaux, a showman of wild

animals, and transported to Paris where she quickly became a fashionable kind of entertainment for bourgeois and later lower-class spectators. In Versailles, naturalist Georges Cuvier examined her and determined her status in the evolution chain based on her physical appearance. Sharpley-Whiting explains: "Baartman will be placed within this hole in the European system of representation as a highly developed animal, and then closely scrutinized in order to determine her relationship to other animals and human beings. She will be used as a yardstick by which to judge the stages of Western evolution, by which to discern identity, difference, and progress" (23). The "science" of the time was simply based on the gaze and what the Western mind could deduce from what was seen, and it therefore proved adept at producing biased and ethnocentric conclusions. After Baartman's death, Cuvier made a plaster mold of her body and placed her brain and genitalia in jars to be displayed at the Musée de l'Homme, in order to educate the crowds on the evolution of Western civilization and the inferior status of indigenous people. While her brain and genitalia were restituted to her native land in 2002, Baartman's body cast remains in the archives of the Musée de l'Homme, closed for renovations until 2015.[39] Although Sarah Baartman was not photographed, the plaster cast of her body, her conserved brain and genitalia along with several lithographs represent tokens that assisted in the transformation of her body into a signifier of debased, naïve, savage, almost bestial Otherness in colonial France. In *La Chambre Claire: Note sur la photographie* (1980), Roland Barthes explains the inherent bond that unites the photograph and its signifier in an inalterable, almost morbid union: "On dirait que la Photographie emporte toujours son référent avec elle, tous deux frappés de la même immobilité amoureuse ou funèbre, au sein même du monde en mouvement: ils sont collés l'un à l'autre, membre par membre, comme le condamné enchaîné à un cadavre dans certains supplices" (17).[40] The plaster cast of the Hottentot Venus by its mere existence has

the effect of constantly resurrecting Sarah Baartman. With her, the colonial obsession with the oddity of Others – scientifically and anthropologically confirming the superiority of Western civilizations – in line with their being ultimately used as objects of colonial propaganda, survive in the form of specters. Barthes explains: "Et celui ou cela qui est photographié, c'est la cible, le référent, sorte de petit simulacre, d'*eidôlon* émis par l'objet, que j'appellerais volontiers le *Spectrum* de la Photographie, parce que ce mot garde à travers sa racine un rapport au "spectacle" et y ajoute cette chose un peu terrible qu'il y a dans toute photographie: le retour du mort" (23).[41] The spectacle (both live and still) in the case of Sarah Baartman should therefore be considered as a construct of immutable signs designed to transcend history, its spectral quality a reminder of colonial ideals and the Other's inferiority.

Figure 1.1: Plaster mold and skeleton of the Hottentot Venus, as they were presented at the Musée de l'Homme until 1976



The lengthy display of the Hottentot Venus reveals the systematic production of spectacle in postmodern Western civilizations. In *La Société du Spectacle,* Guy Debord describes the spectacle as a "falsification" of reality ("qui inverse le réel") and notes: "En même temps, la réalité vécue est matériellement envahie par la contemplation du spectacle, et reprend en elle-même l'ordre spectaculaire en lui donnant une adhésion positive… la réalité surgit dans le spectacle, et le spectacle est réel. Cette aliénation réciproque est l'essence et le soutien de la société existente" (8).[42] In a society driven by production and consumption, the spectacle appears as a manifestation of the power in place: in a colonial society, the spectacle of dominated bodies displayed the colonizing nation's superiority (as we will see with the 1931 Exposition Coloniale). Sarah Baartman was successively a victim of colonial expansion and a symbol of Western domination. An eternal object of spectacle, her image as *Autre* remains attached to her body well into the twenty-first century. In a postcolonial nation such as France, the remnants of that colonial imagery continue to be used, if not so blatantly, in museums such as the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration in Paris.

Baartman's case is significant of the obsessive interest of France for the Other that subsisted well beyond her time, ethnographer Michel Leiris' extensive research on Africa being evident proof.[43] In the late twentieth century, Baartman's supposedly abnormal physical traits were still exposed as commodities to the gaze of the Parisian spectator. Baartman's body was in fact exposed as an object of consumption both in her lifetime (in the salons where she was forced to prostitute herself) and beyond, at the Musée de l'Homme. As one of the four museums comprised in the two wings of the majestic Palais de Chaillot at the Trocadéro (adjacent to the Eiffel Tower), the Musée de l'Homme (formerly Musée d'Ethnographie) occupies a place of choice among the most visited sites of the capital. The second part of this chapter will reveal the

locations chosen for exhibits built around the Other to be extremely telling of the involvement of politics in the production of the image.

Baartman's image, thus produced and reproduced *ad vitam aeternam* as an icon of sexual Otherness and Western superiority, fixed in time and space in one of Paris' oldest and most respected museums, represents for the purpose of this study the starting point of a capitalist trend of production and consumption of the image of the Other, and of the use of aesthetic means for political purposes. Sarah Baartman became her own signifier when her image became separated from her body, both during her lifetime and later at the MH, turning her into a readily consumable commodity first for the gaze of the audience, and eventually for their physical contentment. This last consumer activity was twofold. It is known that Baartman ended her life as a prostitute. Additionally, as related in Sharpley-Whiting's work, "the plaster body molding of Bartmann caused such excitement among museum visitors … that its exhibition was discontinued. It appears that Sarah Bartmann, sadly and ironically commemorated in song, theater, and plaster, alive or dead remained a curious spectacle capable of inciting sexual frenzy and fervor well into the latter half of the twentieth century" (31). Baartman's image came to be what Westerners ultimately desired and what eventually outlived her.

The public layers that compose Baartman's image have left numerous artists preoccupied with the task of rehabilitating her character. In *Vénus Noire*, French-Tunisian filmmaker Abdellatif Kechiche turns back to what he calls "un passé qui n'est pas réglé" ("an unsolved past," Tonet 6). Kechiche's work exemplifies the type of literary and cinematographic oeuvres this study will draw from in order to accentuate the ascending use of movement and fluidity as means to deconstruct the official image of the Other in France. Mobility in terms of time, gender norms, and race in the conception of the Other thrives in *Vénus Noire* as its manifestations are

opposed to the stillness of the multiple performances Baartman is successively put through by her stage directors (Kechiche included). The following analysis reveals the use of the *mise-en-abîme* in *Vénus Noire* as the concrete interpretation of the cultural and historical fracture that separates the audience from the spectacle at the time of Baartman and still today at the CNHI.

b) The Voyeur/Vue Dialectic: Mise-en-Scène and Mise-en-Abîme in the Spectacle de l'Autre

Kechiche's *Vénus Noire* (2010) opens with French naturalist and zoologist Georges Cuvier unveiling the terrifyingly realistic body cast of the Hottentot Venus in front of a scientific audience, making sure the jar containing her genitalia is passed along as he presents the results of his study. Later in the film, Sarah Baartman is shown cutting pictures of herself out of the daily paper and sticking them onto her bedroom wall in the apartment she shares with her master, Caezar. Moments later, Caezar's associate is shown sculpting little statuettes of the Hottentot Venus which he sells at the end of every show, claiming that the audience can, for very little money, have "[their] very own Vénus Hottentot." As Kechiche depicts Baartman entering the space of the Western, racialized, gendered discourse where she is meant to be displayed, he demonstrates the identitarian process of doubling the female Other is subjected to: she is both object and subject as she stands at the core of this *voyeur*/*vue* dialectic. As an actor, she is a subject in the spectacle. In entering that space, she also becomes a commodity and part of the capitalist framework. Her image is consumed not only by the gaze of the *voyeur*, but also by the photograph or filmmaker who takes on the task to present and represent this female Other. On a theoretical level, how does Kechiche's work (a work of re/presentation) differ from Cuvier's (presentation and display)? How can we reconcile the idea of passive observation and unintended script (Kechiche) with purposeful display (Cuvier)?

In Kechiche's film, Baartman's image is doubled infinitely as her story is narrated on the screen and her identity is progressively split through the newspaper cuts, the statuettes, and eventually the infamy that outlived her. John Berger's 1972 study of the cultural impact of the image, *Ways of Seeing*, explains the doubling of the image from the matter as being the result of a lack: there is no lack at the moment the image is created, but it is created in prevision of the inevitable lack that the disappearance of the body will leave. Berger explains: "Images were first made to conjure up the appearances of something that was absent. Gradually, it became evident that an image could outlast what it represented … An image became a record of how X had seen Y. This was the result of an increasing consciousness of individuality, accompanying an increasing awareness of history" (10). The everlasting nature of representation is the one element each of the directors of Baartman's fate strove to accomplish as they each presented her as something she was not. And yet, only Cuvier's plaster mold on display at the MH managed to overcome history and leave us with a timeless image of the Hottentot Venus.

In *Vénus Noire*, Kechiche denounces the reproduction and trade of the Other's image as a social commentary on the fixity of the Other's image in France today. In "Photography and the Making of the Other," Elizabeth Edwards explains the intrinsic relationship between photography, anthropology and the sciences regarding the Other's image. She writes: "It is the whole visual economy in which images operate and the specific sites of consumption which are fundamental in creating the Other, for photographs are objects made precisely to be reproduced and disseminated across space and time. Further, images accrue value through the social processes of accumulation, possession, and exchange" (239). Several accounts have confirmed that scientist Georges Cuvier had requested artistic representations of the Hottentot Venus' peculiar physique, in the form of paintings.[44] In *Vénus Noire*, Baartman is seen posing for two

artists as part of a *mise-en-abîme* process in order for Kechiche to denounce the ideological role that art played in the construction of the fixed image of the Other in France.

In associating with the scientific realm, art at the time of human zoos became part of a commodification process that turned the Other body into a valuable object of trade.[45] More so when photographs became available in the mid-nineteenth century, yet equally at the time of Baartman and Cuvier in the form of paintings, tangible representations of the Other were made available for the public to possess (thereby comforting them in their superiority as Westerners) and trade, marking the Other and his body with an exclusively capitalistic value, on par with the spirit of colonialism and the slave trade.[46] In *Capital*, Karl Marx defines a commodity as "an object outside us, a thing that by its properties satisfies human wants of some sorts or another" (26). In the context of exhibitions in the form of shows such as those to which Baartman was subjected in her lifetime, or curatorial displays at the Musée de l'Homme and the 1931 Exposition Coloniale, these "human wants" are those that helped build the nationalistic ideology of One vs. Other that is still expressed today in contemporary politics of immigration.

Elizabeth Edwards warns against generalizing the impact of the Other's image on nineteenth-century audiences: "One must distinguish, for example, between images which created a scientifically determined racial Other and those which simultaneously fed on and constructed a loosely defined, more generalized and pervasive, exotic alterity. The Other at the scientific laboratory is related to, but not necessarily the same as, the Other of the popular imagination in the exposition" (243). Kechiche however shows both in *Vénus Noire* and in his film commentary that the two types of representations are intrinsically linked in the case of Sarah Baartman, precisely because her image still haunts contemporary representations of ethnic and gender Otherness. Seeing the mold of Sarah Baartman for the first time, Kechiche explained:

> J'ai été voir son moulage de plâtre et là, je me suis sentie face à elle. Elle avait vécu deux cents ans plus tôt et voilà qu'on parlait d'elle et qu'elle était là, comme toujours présente parmi nous. Cela ressemblait à un conte fantastique, à une résurrection. J'ai éprouvé pour elle un sentiment de fraternité immense, en même temps qu'une certaine perplexité, comme face à un sphinx. (Tonet 5) [47]

In presenting the case of the Hottentot Venus to a contemporary audience, Kechiche is entering the complex realm of representation, one that his works have been known to strikingly interrogate.

First presented as a captured bush woman by Caezar, then as an exceedingly sexualized savage by Réaux, and finally as a marvelous object of pseudo-scientific considerations by Cuvier, Sarah Baartman is shown in Kechiche's film to spend her short life being displayed as the Other that her stage directors wanted her to be. The different stages of her life in fact correspond to the different stages onto which she was displayed, which fall into two categories. On one hand, there were the live stages of Caezar and Réaux, where she had become a trope for the "anti-erotic." In "Display of the Body Hottentot," Z.S. Strother explains: "It was as the figure of the anti-erotic that Baartman was reassuring to a European audience. The 'Hottentot' represented a fantasy creature without language or culture, without memory or consciousness" (2). Under the directions of Caezar and Réaux, Baartman was physically placed and guided on a stage she could not escape. On the other hand, both at the MH and on screen, what is left of Baartman is displayed as a token for a moment of our history that has passed and onto which the spectator's gaze is guided either by the curator or the film director. Behind the glass of the museum display and behind the screen, she is once again confined to a space of her director's choosing, which remains one of consumption through the gaze. In truth, each of Baartman's "stage directors" has passed her image from the stage to the audience as an element transfixed in time and space. Baartman entered the society of spectacle on stage and is still standing at its

core, on screen, although this time, it is Kechiche's "sentiment de fraternité immense" that brings forth Baartman in a new light, a true light void of the habitual director's "shower" complex.

Guy Debord explains in *La Société du spectacle* that modern societies are subjected to a spectacle that is born of the artistic and capitalistic relationship between the object, its production and its audience: "Le spectacle est le *capital* a un tel degré d'accumulation qu'il devient image" (34).[48] This intricate relationship that turns art into capital and capital into art is what has marked Sarah Baartman's destiny and demise, and it is the relationship that Kechiche has chosen to expand beyond what was known of Baartman's story. While the spectacles in which she partakes under the guidance of Caezar and Réaux are based on historical documentaion, the last part of the film (which pictures her as a prostitute first in a brothel, then in a sordid hotel room) was completed by Kechiche's vision of Baartman for lack of substantial archives.[49] Kechiche, who is particularly keen on long shots and lengthy, uncut scenes, admits to have been looking for "l'épuisement du spectateur" ("[looking for] the spectator to be exhausted") in both the prostitution scenes and the scene depicting Sarah's death. He explains: "Soit il [le spectateur] finit par rejeter ce à quoi je veux le faire participer, soit cet épuisement l'oblige à un questionnement, à une réflexion sur ce que raconte le film" ("Either he [the spectator] ends up rejecting what I want him to partake in, or this exhaustion forces him to question things, to reflect on what the film is about" Tonet 8). Kechiche's commentary here coincides with the strategy of display Caezar and Réaux are shown to have used on Baartman: presenting the excess through her exacerbated traits in order to anchor the spectators in a capitalist framework.

Figure 1.2: Yahima Torres as Sarah Baartman in *Vénus Noire* (2010)

One particular scene stands out as actually directing the spectator's gaze to the spectacle in itself. In this scene, Sarah and Réaux' wife Jeanne are working in a brothel where Réaux himself brings customers who are interested in having intercourse with Jeanne as they focus on Sarah's peculiar genital traits. This lengthy scene emphasizes the audience's need for spectacle as well as their spontaneous detachment from the object of desire: the Other remains mystical, behind a smoke screen while the *voyeur* is allowed to possess the familiar object (here the white woman) which is attainable. The scene accelerates with the sexual act (Kechiche's finest touch, his trademark since his 2007 film *La Graine et le mulet*) and blossoms into the tragedy of the spectacle: the customer, once satisfied, explains to both women that he had seen them in Réaux' salon show before, that he thought they were both very talented, and that they should make their way back to the stage.[50] This last comment truly reveals the tragedy of being the *Vue* ("the one

who is seen") as opposed to the *Voyeur* ("the one who sees") for Sarah and Jeanne, as the confusion between the actual stage and the stage of life becomes overwhelming, and their control over the spectacle proves to be deceiving. Later on, the prostitutes at the brothel are shown to a doctor who determines that Sarah is at an advanced stage of illness, although the specific illness is not mentioned. As they are shown leaving the brothel, Jeanne reminisces about the shows they did together and hopes for a revival of the past – will she survive without her Other? The only time Baartman will regain the stage after leaving Jeanne is as her own plaster cast.

Beyond the *voyeur/vue* dialectic, the aforementioned scene reveals traces of the notions of fearing while at the same time desiring the Other, as investigated by Frantz Fanon in *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1952). In his chapter entitled "Le Nègre et la psychopathologie," Fanon outlines the predefined characteristics that Western science has attached to the Other – in this specific chapter, the Black man. He writes: "Mais c'est dans sa corporéité que l'on atteint le nègre. C'est en tant que personnalité concrète qu'on le lynche," "[A]voir la phobie du nègre, c'est avoir peur du biologique. Car le nègre n'est que biologique. Ce sont des bêtes. Ils vivent nus" and "Le nègre est génital" (132, 134, 145).[51] According to Fanon, this misconception of a purely biological being leads the white man to both fear and envy this imagined Other sexuality: "Car le nègre a une puissance sexuelle hallucinante…La supériorité du nègre est-elle réelle? Tout le monde *sait* que non. Mais l'important n'est pas là. La pensée prélogique du phobique a décidé qu'il en était ainsi" (128-9).[52] Fanon's writing reveals an Other who is exclusively considered in his physicality, a soulless shell defined by strength and sexual prowess. The colonizer's obsession with the physique of the colonized has lead to the fragmentation and transformation of the Other's body into a sole sexual signifier, as exemplified in the case of Sarah Baartman.

In *Peau noire, masques blancs*, Fanon does not however draw the same conclusions in his analysis of the Other female. In his chapter "La femme de couleur et le blanc," he focuses on Caribbean author Mayotte Capécia's novel *Je suis martiniquaise* and denunciates her unapologetic desire to whiten her lineage by marrying a French man.[53] Despite Fanon's disinterest in the colonial objectification of the female Other, his theory on the "homme de couleur" is applicable in the scene with Sarah and Jeanne in *Vénus Noire*. The Black female is presented by Kechiche as an object that can be sexually seized and possessed. Yet she is still feared by the white man as he solely focuses on her genitalia during the sexual act while making love to the white woman Jeanne. His fear of the Other is truly characteristic of the Westerners' fear of the unknown, a fear that cultural institutions at the time attempted to alleviate with colonialist propaganda, in physically displaying the Other in salons or in human zoos. The sexual act in this scene mirrors the disembodiment of the Other, which in turn connotes and prefigures the violent fragmentation to which Baartman was subjected after her death.

Kechiche's description of his discovery of Sarah Baartman culminates in a broader critique of contemporary French society that spans from the cult of spectacle to the issues strewn by an unresolved history of immigration:

> Ce qui m'a le plus impressionné dans le destin de Saartjie, c'est ce qui va au-delà de l'Histoire. Son histoire traverse le temps et reste très actuelle. Ce qui se joue au niveau du regard de l'autre se manifeste dans la société du spectacle telle que nous la vivons aujourd'hui. Politiquement, nous vivons une décennie qui marque le retour d'un certain racisme, de comportements de plus en plus méprisants envers l'autre.[54] (Tonet 6)

Kechiche's adaptation of Sarah Baartman's life and death story is unique in that it does not offer or attempt to hint at any of her feelings or motives. What is left is the image of the Hottentot Venus in its purest form. The omnipresence of her body and face on screen is artistically coupled with sequences of cadenced and ever so often accelerating music. In literally re-presenting

Baartman's story to the general public, Kechiche brings the plaster cast to life, countering the lifeless, inalterable statue exhibited at the Musée de l'Homme. The timelessness of the fixed image is transfigured in Kechiche's film, displaced, replaced and moved along the different spectrums of gender, race and history: Kechiche reveals the trope of movement as a tool to deconstruct the Other's image, rebuild a sense of identity, and reveal the intricacies of the art of spectacle.

The final shot of *Vénus Noire* is a static view of Baartman's cast, left behind after Cuvier and his fellow ethnographers agreed on her inferior, savage-like status. After Cuvier's presentation, her cast was transported to the Musée de l'Homme where it was exposed, along with her skeleton, brain, and genitalia, until 1976. The display of Sarah Baartman was far from being the first of its kind in Paris. A cabinet of curiosities was created in 1662 in the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, including, among other artifacts, the mummified body of an Arab, as explained by Robert Aldrich in "Colonial Museums in a Postcolonial Europe:" "Such cabinets testified to unsystematic interest in overseas areas that remained unfamiliar, and to a desire to possess strange and wondrous objects. Ethnographic items, natural history specimens, archeological relics and even human remains were more or less indiscriminately collected and exhibited side by side" (Aldrich 247). The desire to possess and show the unfamiliar is what has driven ethnographic exhibits in Paris to center around the body of the Other, splitting it in half between matter and image. The capitalistic aspect of *offre* and *demande* in the exotic arts transpires today in the polemical openings of the Musée du Quai Branly (MQB) and the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, (CNHI) and in the ideological fight against fixity by Kechiche and Chamoiseau, among others.

2) From the Musée des Colonies to the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration: Displaying the Other in Paris

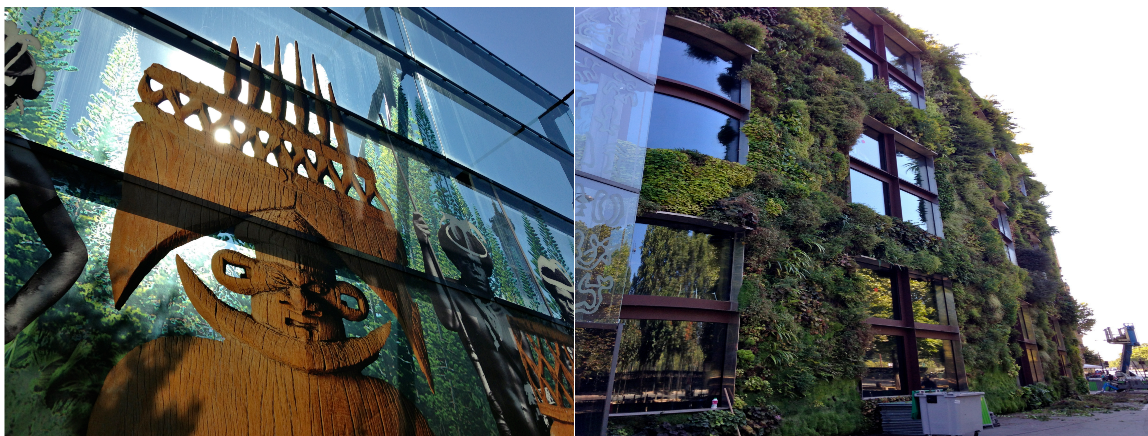
a) The Quai Branly Polemic: Introduction to Museum Culture in Paris

In a recent article published in the *New York Times*, Edward Rothstein contrasts the surprisingly fragmented exhibits of the Quai Branly museum with the overwhelmingly traditional nature of museums in Paris: "The European Enlightenment, born here, enshrined Reason as its deity. Museums became its temples. In them distractions were to be stripped away, and essentials revealed. In some ways the traditional museum is French in its origins, just as the modern Encyclopedia is" (2). In France, national and classified (provincial) museums are directly attached to the Ministry of Culture and managed by the Direction des Musées de France (DMF). As Sally Price explains in *Paris Primitive: Jacques Chirac's Museum on the Quai Branly*, "(n)ational museums are 'institutions of the State,' which keeps particularly tight reins on their State-certified curators" (Price 23). Certain museums (such as the Musée de l'Homme) are under the direction of the Ministry of Education while others - such as the Musée de la Marine - fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Defense. Major museums have opposed the control of the DMF and have become *établissements publics* under the direct control of the Ministry of Culture, which gives them more budgetary and administrative freedom (the Louvre as well as the Musée du Quai Branly fall under this category). This direct relationship with the State strengthens the potentiality for French museums to be used as tools of the French government's spreading of its culture and values at the national level. [55]

When President Jacques Chirac decided to move the controversial Native Art collection put together by art dealer Jacques Kerchache from the Musée du Louvre to the Musée du Quai Branly in 2006, questions arose as to whether the relationship between the State and the arts

remained sustainable in postcolonial France. Two museums had been taken into consideration for hosting Chirac's project, both of them trademarks of France's colonial past: the Musée de l'Homme in the Palais de Chaillot, and the Musée des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie at the Porte Dorée (formerly Musée des Colonies, currently housing the CNHI). Price refers to "a game of musical chairs" (28) as she details all the steps that led to the creation of the Musée du Quai Branly. The Quai Branly case, in two of its essential factors, shows parallels to the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration: the debate surrounding the location that was finally agreed upon to host an *arts premiers* ("primitive art") collection in Paris and additionally the *mise-en-scène* of said collection inside the museum.

Figure 1.3: Exterior view of the Musée du Quai Branly



Paris' main museums that had once been considered to host the project demonstrated their supremacist ethics when approached to display an *arts premiers* collection, the Louvre declaring it had never meant to be "universalist," and the Musée de l'Homme pointing to the invalidity of "dismantling a venerable scientific and educational institution and turning its contents into what they saw as meaningless instruments of titillation for the elite" (Price 43). Once Chirac became President of the Republic in 1995, and after a certain amount of political maneuvering, his project was temporarily housed in a small pavilion (Pavillon des Sessions)

attached to the Louvre. The scattered exhibit left visitors and scholars perplexed, as the artifacts were presented out of their acquisition context. The interpretive area did not provide the visitor with any information regarding the cultures represented in the gallery, but rather blatantly demonstrated their intellectualization by Surrealist figure André Breton, whose private collection was donated to the exhibit.[56] Price asks: "How were [visitors] to balance the creativity of the artists whose works were displayed in the galleries versus the aesthetic sensitivities of French men who had validated them for a European audience?" (62). Additionally, the methods of acquisition of most artifacts in the exhibit itself were questionable and raised ethical questions among political and legal institutions.

The validity of the collection, first presented in the Pavillon des Sessions and later in its current home of the MQB, is equally relevant to this study as its *mise-en-scène* and its political affiliations. Just a year after the opening of the MQB, another controversial exhibit, directed by former Minister of Justice Jacques Toubon, opened its doors: the *Repères* exhibit at the newly inaugurated Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, housed in the Palais de la Porte Dorée. As parallel projects reflecting each other on either side of town (the MQB at the Trocadéro – West Paris, and the CNHI at the Bois de Vincennes - East Paris), both *excentrés* from the main museums of Paris, the two locations provide their visitors with static views and images of the Other: the MQB with its indigenous artifacts collected by European travelers and colonizers and the CNHI with its disparate images of immigrants, scattered along a series of sculptures and photographs created in majority by non-immigrant artists. In contrasting the 1931 Exposition Coloniale with today's permanent exhibit on the history of immigration, *Repères* ("landmarks"), the following section will explore the notions of display and doubling at the Palais de la Porte Dorée.

The official mission of the CNHI is irremediably overshadowed by the structure in which the exhibit was installed. In *Phantasmatic Indochina: French Colonial Ideology in Architecture, Film, and Literature* (1996), Panivong Norindr explains that the Palais was commanded by the French Colonial Empire to promote the development of its numerous colonies at the time of the 1931 Exposition, to "'ravish' and arouse desire for the colonies" (Norindr 16). The CNHI was commissioned by the French government in 2003, with a mission of "faire connaître à un public le plus large possible deux siècles d'histoire de l'immigration en France et de contribuer ainsi à faire changer les regards et les mentalités sur l'immigration" (Murphy 62).[57] Both exhibits (1931 and 2007) were therefore born of official, governmental demands; both exhibits used specific *mise-en-scène* devices in order to broadcast and maintain a certain image of the Other. In the end, both exhibits have become the core of an ever-expanding doubling process.

b) Le Palais de la Porte Dorée

Patricia Morton's study of the 1931 Exposition Coloniale, *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris*, comprises an extensive exposé of the governmental motivations that lie behind the process of building the exhibit in the Bois de Vincennes at the time of the first independence movements in some of the colonies.[58] It is first important to note the nature of the site that was chosen for the exhibit. On the edge of Paris, the 12th arrondissement was an "undeveloped, unregulated, mysterious, and dangerous territory," a ghetto of Parisian life. Morton explains:

> Maréchal Lyautey [the man in charge of designing the exhibit, a French Army General in charge of Morocco in the 1920s] himself made the analogy between the colonies and eastern Paris, the poor, left-wing part of the city, as equally in need of enlightenment and development. Just as the colonies were France's "other," so the zone was the "other" of Paris. Although it was unacknowledged, the exoticism of this locale underlay the contrived romanticism of the Exposition and produced a doubling of its marginality. (131)

The simple act of putting the Other on display on the edge of town (the site was accessible by metro – still today "Porte Dorée" is the last stop on the line), on a site that was known to be a ghetto, marks the premise to one of today's museum of immigration most problematic aspects: while in 1931 such an extensive space was necessary for the building of the Exposition, today the *Repères* exhibit that only takes up the second floor of the Palais could easily be transported to the center of town. There seems to be a trend in the process of locating museums in Paris: while the Louvre, Musée d'Orsay or Musée du Monde Arabe are placed along the banks of the Seine river, the CNHI sits on the edge of town, away from tourist affluence, and the MQB's outside wall covered with vertical gardens camouflages it from the gaze of passers-by (Figure 1.3).

Given the incredible amount of space that the Bois de Vincennes had to offer, the Exposition Coloniale turned out to be a unique spectacle, mostly due to its impressive unfolding of architectural displays. The exhibit functioned as a didactic event, where one could stroll from Art Déco Metropolitan constructions such as the Musée des Colonies down to an impressive reproduction of the Angkor pavilion in the Indochina section, so the visitors would notice the gradual loss of civilization as the exhibit extended towards the zoo.[59] Panivong Norindr analyzes this architectural concept of doubling Western and native architecture as a manifestation of what he terms "the French colonial phantasmatic." In *Phantasmatic Indochina*, he approaches this concept as "the ideological reality through which colonial fantasies as the support of desire [the desire for exotic and other sensual and cognitive experiences] emerged, operated, and manifested themselves. It also refers to the psychic process, the structuring action, which shapes and orders the subject's life as a whole" (16). Added to the doubling in architecture was another form of doubling: that of the human body as artifact. By showcasing natives from various countries and continents, the exhibit was successful at seducing its audience in turning the body of the Other in

a ready commodity to be consumed through the gaze and also monetary appreciation, therefore fixing his image in time and space.

At this point, it is essential to incorporate the notion of spectacle in relation to the commodification of bodies. Guy Debord's theory on spectacle as developed and published in 1967 holds true for the 1931 Exposition Coloniale as well as for today's exhibit at the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration. In *La Société du Spectacle*, Debord explains that the spectacle has become the absolute incarnation of commodification and capitalism; it mediates people's relationship with what is to be consumed and is used as a means of propaganda for the capitalist contemporary world: "Le spectacle est le discours ininterrompu que l'ordre présent tient sur lui-même, son monologue élogieux. C'est l'autoportrait du pouvoir à l'époque de sa gestion totalitaire des conditions d'existence" (26).[60]

Figure 1.3: Outer walls at the Palais de la Porte Dorée

The process of glorification of the French colonial empire that was intended with the extravagant Exposition Coloniale of 1931 was imprinted onto the very walls of the Palais,

doubling once again the image of the colonized and accessorizing it to the all-powerful figure of the French nation. On the outer walls of the Palais de la Porte Dorée, the *bas-relief* sculpted by artist Alfred Janniot shows the colonized nations divided according to geography and goods that they brought to the Empire (Figure 1.3). All elements (Africa, Asia, Oceania and America) converge towards the figure of France, represented under the traits of Terra Mater or Abundance, giving her blessing. France's colonial past overwhelmingly bears on the Palais' outside walls while the inside has been turned not into a museum, but a modernized "Cité," the CNHI. The term "Cité," while it may convey a sense of community, is first and foremost a reminder of the projects built in the 1970s outside Paris to house immigrants, also called "Cités." With the colonial Other forever engraved in his subjection on its outer walls, can the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration separate itself from the weight of history and from Debord's notion of spectacle as evidence of governmental power and propaganda?

c) *Repères*, Horror Vacui, and the Mise-en-Abîme

The newly remodeled Palais de la Porte Dorée offers an ideologically corrupted form of housing for the CNHI. To open a museum of immigration in a place that was devoted to the glorification of colonization is problematic in and of itself. In fact, the main challenge of the Cité is to present immigration to the public in terms that would separate it from the notion of colonization, thus concealing France's colonial past. In his essay about the Cité entitled "Object/Subject Migration: the National Center of the History of Immigration," Dominic Thomas indicates: "to decouple an examination of French immigration history from a concerted analysis of a transcolonial framework that would highlight French colonial ambitions and their indissociability from subsequent migratory patterns, would be to obfuscate or revise a key chapter in that collective experience" (128). In trying to homogenize the concept of immigration,

have the representations of immigration inside the museum managed to demarcate themselves from the sculptures outside the museum?

Inside the permanent *Repères* exhibit at the Cité, one cannot help but notice two problematic aspects in the display of immigration: on one hand the overwhelming number of valueless personal objects, and on the other hand, the voluntary confusion of identities between first-time immigrants and second- or third-generation immigrants, that is to say, those "issus de l'immigration" (the children of immigrants), therefore of French nationality and not immigrants in any real sense. In the same room, one encounters letters and journals belonging to Portuguese and Polish immigrants, the story of a young African named Kingsey (by photographer Olivier Jobard, Figure 1.4), and numerous artistic photographs of the *banlieue*, accentuating the open space of the projects. Well-lit in the open rooms of the Palais de la Porte Dorée, these photographs are displayed on adjacent walls along the exhibit, leading the visitor like a *fil d'Ariane*, contrasting the display cases filled with anonymous objects scattered as if after a shipwreck.

The series of photographs by Denis Darzacq entitled "Cités" (Figure 1.5) depicts young adults walking in the projects with a rather determined air. The sense of open space in these photographs can be felt in the open space of the exhibit – an appreciated contrast with the stuffiness of the downstairs Salons of the Palais, featuring circular murals and set up with bulky Art Deco furniture. This sense of openness and movement in *Repères* does not, however, compensate for the blatant lack of narratives regarding origins and generations. The stigma of colonization that is inscribed on the outer walls of the Palais does not find its way into the *Repères* exhibit, ultimately leaving the visitor confused as to the role of colonization in these

people's lives. Instead of democratizing the concept of immigration, the exhibit tends to isolate it as an abstract phenomenon with no real ties to the French colonizing history.

Figure 1.4: ***Kingsey, Carnet de Route d'un Immigré Clandestin.*** **Olivier Jobard (2001)**

Figure 1.5: ***Cités*****. Denis Darzacq (2004-5)**

The crowding of artifacts, intended to give a sense of materiality to the concept of immigration, doubles once more the figure of the immigrant, separating him from his possessions left in France in the same manner the colonized were only recognized for the cotton or sugar they brought to the Empire (Figure 1.3). The excessive amount of tokens eventually culminates in the centerpiece, a walled construction in which artifacts from the cultures that are said to compose France are displayed (Figure 1.6). There the visitor can witness the artistic blending of disparate objects from various countries, such as a hookah, Chinese masks, a couscous machine, or even a 1998 world cup stuffed animal mascot. Dominic Thomas explains that the excessive reification and globalization of the concept of immigration makes the purpose of the Cité all the more unrealistic and inseparable from the walls it stands in: "in each instance, the relationship between the *other* and the *we* remains exceptionally vague, confused and complicated by the question of appropriation, reductive constructs, and of course the futility of collapsing identities and origins as required by Republican ideals that have not erased racism and in which the collective signifier remains open to (mis)interpretation" (131).

What such a structure seeks to achieve is comparable – on a different scale – to Umberto Eco's study of the American West Coast related in *Travels in Hyperreality* (1986), and his use of the concept of *horror vacui* ("fear of empty space"). In each place (supposedly 'museums') Eco finds himself, he cannot help but notice the superposition of the real and the fake, making for an excessive display of *horror vacui*, a space where every single square inch is occupied by a detail or a token. Describing the Hearst Castle in Central California, Eco notes about the abundance of fake and real artifacts that:

> The striking aspect of the whole is not the quantity of antique pieces plundered from half of Europe, or the nonchalance with which the artificial tissue seamlessly connects the fake and genuine, but rather the sense of fullness, the obsessive determination not to leave a single space that doesn't suggest something, and

> hence the masterpiece of bricolage, haunted by *horror vacui*, that is here achieved. (Eco 23)

The Californian wax museums and amusement parks described by Eco were built and advertised as authentic fakes and do not, of course, stand on the same scale as the Palais de la Porte Dorée. Unlike the Angkor pavilion, which was built as an exact replica in order to convey a sense of exoticism to the visitors, the Palais (at the time Musée des Colonies) was meant to be an emblem of the French colonial empire. Morton explains: "The museum was unique at the 1931 Colonial Exposition as the only pavilion built as a permanent edifice and the only one that represented both France and its colonies" (273). As such, the Palais was excessively adorned with symbols and images of the idealized *mission civilisatrice*, as shown in Alfred Janniot's outdoor *bas-relief*.[61] In this sense, Eco's concepts of excessive representation and *horror vacui* are significant in this study since they are still very present in the Palais itself as well as in today's *Repères* exhibit.

Figure 1.6: ***Les Objets reconnus comme appartenant au patrimoine français***

It is difficult to appreciate the exhibits at the CNHI without coming into contact with and reflecting upon the building's past life as a colonial and ethnographic museum. At each end of the main floor of the Palais, the visitor can enter an oval room combining garish murals relating the benefits of colonization with European Art Déco furniture to once again suggest the advancements of European civilization. The Salon Maréchal Lyautey is devoted to the Eastern side of France's conquest and focused on representations of Asia and Indochina. The Salon Paul Reynaud is centered around the theme of Africa. On one end, nude men and women from Sub-Saharan Africa are seen dancing in what appears to be a jungle among lions. At the other end of the circular wall, a North African religious figure is depicted as preaching or praying, while another one on a horse is shown defeating a demon, next to a veiled woman all the while reading what seems to be the Koran (Figure 1.7). The excess of these representations is flagrant and can be only explained by the wish to show, at the time of the Exposition Coloniale, the superiority of the Western colonizing nations over the nude, devout, demon-slaying primitive populations they sought to enlighten.[62]

The excessively caricatural *mise-en-scène* of the Other on the downstairs murals taints the visitor's appreciation of the upstairs display of immigration, once again problematizing the mission of the Cité: unlike colonization that officially ended in 1962 with the independence of Algeria, immigration is a contemporary social phenomenon, in progress, not a part of history that belongs to the past. In order for the CNHI to achieve its educational goal, a location that is absolutely separate from the very notion of colonization is essential. The distinction between past and present has not yet been achieved and remains problematic in a museum born of governmental endeavors.

Figure 1.7: Mural in the Salon Paul Reynaud

Tony Bennett's work on the museum culture in Europe in "The Exhibitionary Complex" (1994) sheds light onto the *mise-en-abîme* occurring today at the Palais de la Porte Dorée. Following Michel Foucault's work on the panoptico model in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977), Bennett argues that there exists a social simile between incarceration and exhibition. According to Bennett, the growing popularity of exhibits (temporary showings as opposed to permanent collections) in the imperialist era served the purpose of "democratizing the eye of power," under the guise of educating the crowds (82). Visitors were unknowingly subjected to state power as they were being educated on the proper etiquette for attending exhibitions: "The exhibitionary complex, by contrast, perfected a self-monitoring system of looks in which the subject and object positions can be exchanged, in which the crowd comes to commune with and regulate itself through interiorizing the ideal and ordered view of itself as seen from the controlling vision of power – a site of sight accessible to all" (82).

Today's *Repères* exhibit falls into this category, as we have seen, in successfully estranging and confusing visitors as they are supposedly told about the vast history of French immigration. The message that is conveyed throughout the exhibit is one of achievable integration: the tales of hope for a better life in France portrayed at the Cité falsely lead the visitor to solely consider the immigrants' thankfulness, an image that is not entirely accurate considering the actual discontent that is alive and well in the French *banlieues*. One can wonder if the Cité's purpose could have been to appease the malaise caused by the 2005 *banlieue* riots and reassure the visitor about the state of immigration and integration.[63] In this sense, Bennett's notion of a "self-monitoring system" is achieved as visitors leave the exhibit with a rather positivist conception of immigration and integration in France.

In its effort to demarcate itself from the history of colonization, the CNHI's political subtext differs greatly from the Surrealists' anti-colonialist strategy in their 1931 counter-exhibit entitled *La Vérité sur les Colonies*. In their will to oppose the regulation of the crowd, the Surrealists attempted to reformat the "exhibitionary complex" on display at the Exposition Coloniale in giving the *Vérité*'s visitors the power to form their own conception of imperialism and colonialism.

d) The Surrealists' Counter-Exhibit

French and Francophone intellectuals have through the years reflected on ongoing political events using art, cinema and literature to broadcast their opinion and inspire their readers and spectators. Reflecting on the ideological challenged of the Interwar – and soon to be postcolonial – era, Surrealist, Existentialist, and Negritude artists successively joined forces with political movements in France, turning imperialism and colonialism into a cause for artistic creation and a quest for equality. The attempted symbiosis of politics and poetics in their works

was, at the time, significant of an artistic upheaval against the official version of the Other. The Surrealists firmly opposed the decadent display of the Other in Paris in two ways: first by creating a counter-exhibit to the 1931 Exposition Coloniale, entitled *La Vérité sur les Colonies* and additionally via official publications ("Ne visitez pas l'exposition coloniale" and "Premier bilan de l'exposition coloniale," both published in 1931). Their involvement in the anti-imperialist exhibit enabled the organizing political parties -the PCF (Parti Communiste Francais) and the LDRN (Ligue de Défense de la Race Nègre) - to reach larger audiences and bring validity to their cause. The contribution of intellectuals and artists in such a politically loaded event stands as a reflection of the irrevocable bond between politics and the arts in France, one that was at the time- and is still, as noted earlier - in full display at the Palais de la Porte Dorée.

While the Exposition Coloniale was entertaining thirty-three million visitors in the Bois de Vincennes, another exhibit was in the works in the in the Pavillon des Soviets, in Paris proper, attracting less than five thousand visitors. *La Vérité sur les Colonies* was organized and orchestrated by the main Communist and anti-colonialist parties in France with the help of a small group of Surrealists thinkers: André Breton, Paul Eluard, and Louis Aragon. To its detriment, the *Vérité* exhibit used the same didactic methods as the Exposition Coloniale in order to convey its anti-colonial message. The sentiment of *horror vacui* was omnipresent as Elizabeth Ezra explains in *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France* (2000): "In one room, a display organized by Louis Aragon showed African, Oceanic, and Amerindian sculptures side by side with statues of the Christian Madonna and child, which were labeled 'fétiches chrétiennes'" (27). Additionally, the overwhelming political umbrella of the PCF, if different from Lyautey's, hovered like a dark cloud over the primitive displays. The goal of the organizers had in fact been attained as it was set to imitate the Colonial Expo, only in doing the

exact opposite.[64] Ezra explains that "here, as ever, the Surrealists were aiming to decontextualize the familiar" (Ezra, 27).

In *Phantasmatic Indochina*, Panivong Norindr considers the accumulation and lack of dissociation among the artifacts a didactic ploy to open the visitors' eyes and minds onto the reality of the colonies:

> The unexpected conjunction of photographs, 'primitive' objects and fetishes, maps, texts by Lenin and other Marxist leaders, reports, and so on reorganize the visitor's understanding of 'colonial reality,' rendering it more complex. Unlike *Documents* [Georges Bataille's short-lived glossy review], it repoliticizes the cultural formations by resituating them in a new historical and culture frame. (Norindr 54)

The Surrealists' attempt at integrating the Other into a more global framework lingered onto the edge of sensuality and primitive reasoning, perhaps misplacing the Other onto another form of evolutionary scale. In their effort to extract the Other from the exotic sphere recreated at the Bois de Vincennes, the Surrealists might have been accused of dramatically falling into essentialism.

In truth, the Surrealists believed the Western way of life had separated Man from a primitive world of sensations, more genuine to the intrinsic human existence and less inclined to fall into the faults of capitalism. In *Hybrid Modernities*, Patricia Morton extends Norindr's argument: "The "other," or more specifically, the primitive, was a window into a prerational mentality that could serve as a counter to the horrifying consequences of reason's dominance in modern life" (Morton 107). In order to prove their point, the Surrealists brought the Other into Paris (as opposed to the Bois de Vincennes on the edge of town) and placed a collection of native artifacts among Western art products, pointing to an equivalence in the primitive aspect of material worship. In doing so, the exhibit ultimately reinforced the objectification of the Other and was a precursor to the Quai Branly and CNHI exhibits: "Their conflation of all 'naïve,' 'prerational,' or 'unconscious' art ignored the intricate meanings of primitive objects and the

complex methods by which indigenous artists produced them. The native object was valuable to the Surrealists only as a counter to Western logocentrism and convention, not of value in and of itself" (Morton 110).

Opinions vary among intellectuals concerning the success of the *Vérité* exhibit. The spectator, and not the Other, was put at the center of the exhibit as he was subjectively asked to make his own decisions regarding the notions of race, Otherness, and capitalism. At a time where Colonial Exhibitions were opening throughout France in a spirit of reviving the spectators' imperialist interests, the *Vérité* exhibit was a first and influential attempt at presenting the visitors with another colonial reality. In "Surrealist Racial Politics at Borders of 'Reason': Whiteness, Primitivism and Négritude," Amanda Stansell focuses exactly on the ambiguity of the exhibit and the risks thus engendered by such an avant-garde exhibit design. Focusing on the juxtaposition of artifacts in the exhibit as a means to encourage viewers to form their own opinion on colonialism, Stansell accentuates the "limitations of audience reception" when faced with the artistic *collages*:

> Since the materials the artist uses are taken from other contexts, they never lose their associations with those cultural arenas and are not easily integrated within the artwork; both the former context and the new one remain in play. Conceptual categories therefore appear culturally constructed, yet unfixed, and such fragmentation requires the audience to reconstruct, consciously or unconsciously, the meaning of the artwork. (114)

The *Vérité* exhibit ambiguously gave an active role to the spectator, one that had the potential to leave them puzzled rather than curious, comforting the ideas of imperialism and race selection with which they were being indoctrinated at the Exposition Coloniale.

Today in Paris, the same didactic model seen at *La Vérité sur les colonies* is still deployed by museum curators. The exhibit entitled *Exhibitions: L'Invention du sauvage* at the MQB from November 2011 to June 2012 featured an extensive selection of photographs, short

films, posters and artifacts from nineteenth- and twentieth-century European colonial exhibitions. The curator of this exhibition was Lilian Thuram, a former soccer star from Guadeloupe turned social activist and president of "Fondation Lilian Thuram: Education contre le racisme." In the dimly-lit upper part of the MQB, the visitor was invited to walk through galleries relating among others the life of the Hottentot Venus, the development of craniometry, the role of the colonial exhibits and the creation of the *jardins d'acclimatation,* all the while running into full length and distorting mirrors placed strategically throughout the exhibit. Once more, in the fashion of the CNHI, artifacts were scattered and spotlights were used to emphasize, or so it seems, the monstrosity of the very phenomena that were human zoos. In obliterating the distance between the visitor and the display with simple darkness, the effect was one of absolute focus on the topic at hand: the spectacularization of the Other. In truth, the specific lighting of the exhibit produced a counter-effect in delineating even more the supposed monstrosity of the Other during the colonial period. Busts and statues appeared in the darkness and their terrifying verisimilitude gave the visitor a sense of physically walking inside a true Exposition Coloniale.

The controversial case of Sarah Baartman's mold appeared to have been forgotten when the visitor came face to face with a series of busts, one of them a young Chinese man's, on loan from the Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle (Figure 1.8). The display of this bust, along with four other busts all dating back to the mid-nineteenth century, revealed the ambiguity, if not the absurdity of the exhibit itself, which originally aimed at denouncing these practices. A sign at the entrance of the room in which the busts were placed introduced the beginnings of anthropology, from craniometry to the classification of races according to the shape of people's skulls and the color of their skin. At no point in the exhibit were those practices denounced as inhuman. They

were simply presented to the visitor, who was once again put in charge of forming his own judgment, as explained in Tony Bennett's commentary of the "exhibitionary complex."

Figure 1.8: ***Tchin-Huong, 24 ans, Chinois de la province de Shang-Haï***

Even more problematic was the lack of narrative from one topic to the other, an immense gap left to open interpretation. Thus the second to last room of the exhibit had been turned into a cramped hallway whose walls were covered in lithographs picturing Others, while the very last room was a dark open space with two big screens onto which were projected images and monologues of the contemporary Other, the postcolonial urban French woman (Figure 1.9). This empty room that left the visitor once again in the dark only to be confronted with well-lit moving images seemed haphazardly placed, as if to create a tentative connection between the first immigrants pictured in the hallway and second- generation immigrants *issus de l'immigration*, therefore nationally French.

The problem is, of course, that the “Sauvage” depicted all along the exhibit was not technically an immigrant but rather a captured trophy brought to Europe by imperialists who wanted to expand their colonial empire. The women displayed on the screen were most likely French citizens, whose parents have emigrated from the ancient colonies post-war and post-decolonization, therefore not captured against their will to be displayed in the Metropole. One of the women was veiled, appealing for tolerance. Another one addressed the visitor, explaining her right to equal opportunities in France. The lack of distinction between the two “Others” – the colonial Other, mute object of interest in imperial exhibitions and the postcolonial Other, speaking subject of the Fifth Republic – precipitates the *Invention du Sauvage* exhibit along with the Surrealists’ *Vérité* into a mimetic image of the 1931 Exposition Coloniale, another rendition of Bennett’s “exhibitionary complex.”

Figure 1.9: *Exhibitions: L’Invention du sauvage*. Musée du Quai Branly (2012)

This first chapter has enabled us to set anchor points in the history of France's Others and their representation in Paris. The Hottentot Venus is a prism in this study as she represents the colonial Other doubled with the female Other. In addition, as seen in *Vénus Noire*, she embodies the link between *Histoire* and *histoire*, history and one's personal story. Through his rendition of her individual story, Kechiche has surmounted the frozen temporal gap that truly unites the colonial Other who was on display in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the postcolonial Other who is on display today in Paris at the CNHI. Focusing on Kechiche's rendition of Sarah Baartman's life has also set the basic lines along which this study will be moving in the following chapters: inside/outside and the role of consumerism in the voyeur/vue (spectacle) dialectic; race and ethnicity as essentially Eurocentric concepts that are being reinvented and restructured in contemporary film and literature; gender and sexual identities, and considering the concept of movement on an ideological level for the potential contemporary *flâneuse* (wanderer) in the French urban space. The Hottentot Venus was the link between live spectacle and museum display: through the figure of Sarah Baartman, this first chapter uncovered the active role of official entities within museum culture as a way to disseminate a certain concept of universal French culture to the general public, confirming the diffusion of a fixed image of the Other.

Chapter II
Postcolonial Women Writers, Gender Roles and the Paratext

The colonial subtext of the CNHI as mentioned in Chapter I is paralleled in the publishing realm with the use of the paratext, which is the discourse (preface, photographs, dust jacket, etc.…) that surrounds the text. The walls that were raised around the Other in museums and their "guiding" role in the spectators' visit of the exhibits are comparable to the postcolonial paratext, which fixates the original work in terms descending from the French cultural institutions via the sometimes excessive use of prefaces and photographs. The focus on gender and sexuality in this chapter stems from the double Otherness to which immigrant women in France are subjected. Starting with the early obliteration of Paulette and Jane Nardal from the founding of the Negritude movement, this chapter goes on to unveil the partially institutionalized paratext that enables the works of contemporary Metropolitan women writers to be recognized on the French literary scene while still conforming to the colonial notion of Otherness.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the gender binary within the Negritude movement as it developed alongside the concept of strategic essentialism, and within the more general framework of artistic Otherness in Paris. The literary movement of Negritude emerged in response to the colonial stigma that plagued France's society, culture and literature in the 1930s. In its battle against the fixity of the Other's image in France, Negritude eventually reproduced a gender bias inherited from the French imperial culture as the founding fathers of the movement estranged women in confining them to stereotypical exotic and family-oriented gender roles.[65] Paulette Nardal's creation of *La Revue du Monde Noir* (1931), her and her sister Jane's publications in the *Dépêche Africaine* (1928) and the *Revue,* along with the intellectual gatherings they held at their Clamart salon in Paris have deeply influenced the creation and thought process of the Negritude movement; yet today their works have been eclipsed by those

of Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor and Léon Gontrand Damas, presented as the three original creators of the movement.[66] Paulette Nardal's influence in the movement was instrumental when considering literary and physical feminine fluidity within contemporary narratives of Otherness, as her work constitutes a first attempt at a global, postethnic literary production. Suzanne Césaire's work is introduced in this section through a similar lens. As a victim of essentialism within the movement of Negritude, Césaire was and is still presented today as the archetypal natural Caribbean woman in the publication of her works – then in André Breton's words and today in Daniel Maximin's re-edition of her works –as opposed to a "gender-unspecified" Negritude founder.[67]

The second part of this chapter considers the various expressions of gender, femininity, and sexuality in the contemporary works of Samira Bellil, Nina Bouraoui and Nora Hamdi, as they relate to the socio-cultural events surrounding the figure of the immigrant woman in the Metropole. The Ni Putes Ni Soumises (Neither Whores Nor Submissive) sociopolitical movement that emerged in the early 2000s sought to redefine gender relations and the female identity in the *banlieues*, following an outbreak of violence and rapes displayed in the media, and related in Samira Bellil's testimony *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* (*To Hell and Back: The Life of Samira Bellil*). This movement redefined the image of the *banlieue* woman, heralding new representations of femininity in literature (in the works of Hamdi and Bouraoui) and cinema (in the 2010 film *Tout ce qui brille*, featuring two *banlieue* heroines – see Chapter III). Beginning with an overview of the Calixthe Beyala case (her condemnation by the Académie Française for plagiarism, and the specific packaging of her novels that ensued), this section focuses on selected texts by Hamdi and Bouraoui as examples of gender-challenging and gender-resistant narratives

combined with a strategic use of paratext– publishing material and media presence – pointing to the dual relationship that binds immigrant women writers to the French literary institutions.

1) Literature, Gender and the Walls of Paratext

a) The Nardal Sisters and *La Revue du Monde Noir*

> Les femmes de couleur vivant seules dans la Métropole moins favorisées jusqu'à l'Exposition Coloniale que leurs congénères masculins aux faciles succès, ont ressenti bien avant eux le besoin d'une solidarité raciale qui ne serait pas seulement d'ordre matériel: c'est ainsi qu'elles se sont éveillées à la conscience de race.[68]
>
> Paulette Nardal, "Eveil de la conscience de race" *La Revue du Monde Noir*.

Before Césaire, Damas, and Senghor came to be known as the fathers of the Negritude movement, Caribbean students Jane and Paulette Nardal, Suzanne Césaire, Suzanne Lacascade, and Mayotte Capécia began publishing their works based on their own experiences of exile in the Metropole during the Interwar period. Removed from the case of Sarah Baartman by a short hundred years, an additional question regarding the place of the female Other in the urban narrative as well as in the city as text was brought forward as these Caribbean women laid the foundations for a larger Pan-African movement. The Nardal sisters hosted the Clamart Salon where connections were created with American writers of the Harlem Renaissance such as Langston Hughes or Jamaican political leader Marcus Garvey. In *Beyond Negritude: Essays from Woman in the City*, which chronicles Paulette Nardal's post-Second World War publications upon her return to Martinique, Tracy Sharpley-Whiting references the Nardal sisters as "Black Internationalists [who] saw a world that linked a people by historical processes and conditions such as violent dispersal, a racialized identity (imposed from without), and a commitment to an originary homeland of Africa" (2). Yet Jane and Paulette Nardal's responsibility in the birth of the Negritude movement has been downplayed to a point close to

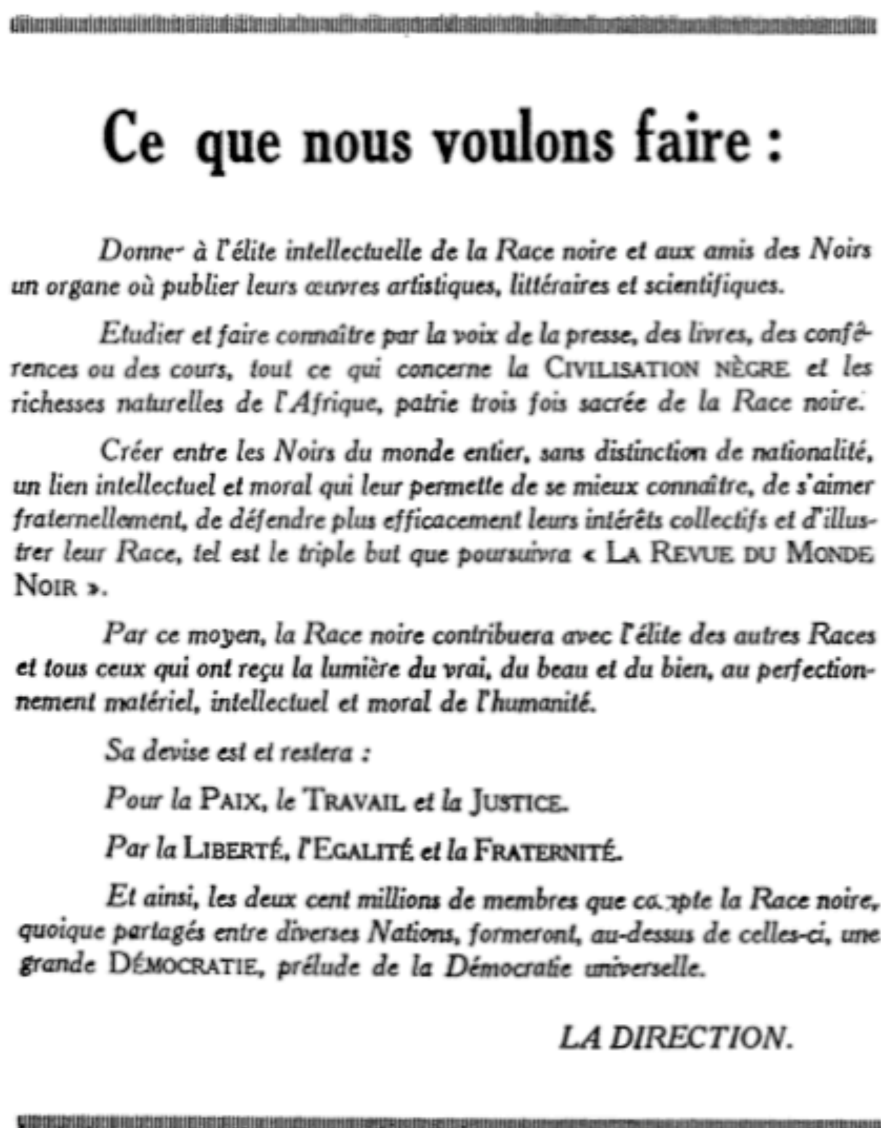
nonexistence, as Sharpley-Whiting explains in an additional study, *Negritude Women*: "… the Nardal sisters, particularly Paulette, have been characterized, in the few works that do mention them, as movement midwives rather than architects" (17).

Martiniquan students Jane, Paulette, and Andrée Nardal were renowned in the 1930s among Francophone intellectuals for hosting French and English-speaking thinkers and students who discussed the condition of the African-American and Caribbean ethnic groups in the modern, post-First World War Western world. Jane Nardal was the first to publish a piece of interest entitled "Internationalisme noir" in the first issue of *La Dépêche Africaine* (1928). In this piece, Jane Nardal brought forth terms that would later become anchors in the Negritude movement on the questions of race and identity. The terms used by Nardal in "Internationalisme noir" – *après-guerre*, *nègre*, *conscience de race*, *esprit de race* – initiated debates among Parisian intellectuals and provided the tools for the future movement of Negritude. Sharpley-Whiting explains:

> As Promethean around issues of identity and race in the black Francophone context as Nardal's concepts of *afro-latinité* and cultural *métissage* were in 1928, they were also importantly subversive; indeed, they went philosophically counter to the universalism supposedly inherent in French humanism, culture, and colonial policies on "nos colonies et nos indigènes." Nardal suggests a decentering of Frenchness. (43)

Jane Nardal was the first Black woman in Paris to question in print the fixity that emblematized French culture in the Metropole and overseas. Her work and her sister Paulette's were truly pioneering in that they originated not only from the voice of the Other in Paris but first and foremost the female Other at a time of colonial revival –as illustrated in the ostentatious display of the 1931 Exposition Coloniale.

Figure 2.1: *La Revue du Monde Noir*'s mission, as published in its first 1931 edition



Ce que nous voulons faire :

Donner à l'élite intellectuelle de la Race noire et aux amis des Noirs un organe où publier leurs œuvres artistiques, littéraires et scientifiques.

Etudier et faire connaître par la voix de la presse, des livres, des conférences ou des cours, tout ce qui concerne la CIVILISATION NÈGRE *et les richesses naturelles de l'Afrique, patrie trois fois sacrée de la Race noire.*

Créer entre les Noirs du monde entier, sans distinction de nationalité, un lien intellectuel et moral qui leur permette de se mieux connaître, de s'aimer fraternellement, de défendre plus efficacement leurs intérêts collectifs et d'illustrer leur Race, tel est le triple but que poursuivra « LA REVUE DU MONDE NOIR ».

Par ce moyen, la Race noire contribuera avec l'élite des autres Races et tous ceux qui ont reçu la lumière du vrai, du beau et du bien, au perfectionnement matériel, intellectuel et moral de l'humanité.

Sa devise est et restera :

Pour la PAIX, *le* TRAVAIL *et la* JUSTICE.

Par la LIBERTÉ, *l'*EGALITÉ *et la* FRATERNITÉ.

Et ainsi, les deux cent millions de membres que compte la Race noire, quoique partagés entre diverses Nations, formeront, au-dessus de celles-ci, une grande DÉMOCRATIE, *prélude de la Démocratie universelle.*

LA DIRECTION.

The disclaimer reproduced above and entitled "Ce que nous voulons faire" (literally "what we want to do," translated by the Nardal sisters as "Our Aim") opened the *Revue du Monde Noir*, their bilingual literary review first published in 1931 – the year of the Exposition Coloniale. "Ce que nous voulons faire" announced and prefigured the Pan-African endeavors of

the Clamart salon and the publications of the *Revue* with the statement: "Créer entre les Noirs du monde entier, sans distinction de nationalité, un lien intellectuel et moral qui leur permette de se mieux connaître, de s'aimer fraternellement, de défendre plus efficacement leurs intérêts collectifs, et d'illustrer leur Race" ("To create among the Negroes of the entire world, regardless of nationality, an intellectual, and moral tie, which will permit them to better know each other, to love one another, to defend more effectively their collective interests and to glorify their race" 3, 4). This opening disclaimer is signed "La Direction" – Jane and Paulette Nardal. In *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World*, Richard Watts explains that the tradition at the time of colonial and early postcolonial authors was for their works to be introduced by either visual paratext (a photograph of the author on the front or back cover) or authorial paratext (a renowned French author writing the preface), thereby guiding the reader into the text.[69] The Nardal sisters' *La Revue* was, in fact, self-published by the members of the Clamart salon and this alone gave them a certain freedom regarding their own publications and the impact their works were meant to have on the "other" Parisian literary scene.[70]

In "L'Eveil de la conscience de race chez les étudiants noirs," published in *La Revue du Monde Noir* (1932), Paulette Nardal articulated that Antillean writers living in the Metropole were, in spite of their better judgment, still living as (intellectual) subjects of the French empire, stuck in an "imitative" phase that invalidated their work, feeling closer to their Latin heritage than their African heritage: "En outre, il était naturel que les Antillais, issus du croisement des deux races, noire et blanche, imbus de culture latine, et ignorants de l'histoire de la race noire, finissent par se tourner vers l'élément qui leur faisait le plus honneur" (344).[71] In *Negritude Women*, Sharpley-Whiting underlines the resemblance between Nardal's argument – comprised

of two phases: the "imitative phase" and the "moral protest" phase as displayed in slave narratives targeted at Antilleans – and Alan Locke's notion of progressive awakening – targeted at African-Americans – in *The New Negro*.[72] Nardal had in fact begun a rapprochement with African-American intellectualism, years before Aimé Césaire came to be known as the Father of Negritude. This bind to early African-American studies situates Nardal as the first Antillean intellectual *de langue française* to bridge this gap and to begin a reflection on the notions of race and nationalism in Paris.[73]

In "L'Eveil," Nardal prefigures her post-Second World War feminist interests later developed in the Martiniquan revue *Women in the City*, and affirms the advances made by female Antillean students in terms of race consciousness in 1930s Paris against the expected but much slower progress of their male counterparts in regards to African-American development in that field:

> Pourtant, parallèlement aux efforts isolés cités plus haut s'affirmaient chez un groupe d'étudiantes antillaises à Paris les aspirations qui devaient se cristalliser autour de la Revue du Monde Noir … plus mûres, elles sont devenues moins sévères, moins intransigeantes, puisque tout est relatif. Leur position actuelle est le juste milieu.[74] (347-348)

In affirming not only the existence, but first and foremost the excellence and superiority of these female thinkers above the male Antillean writers living in Paris at the time, Paulette Nardal prefigures the double bind Francophone women writers will have to work around during their career: they are Others to the main (French) literary sphere and they are also Others to the male Other himself. Their position is one that cannot be neglected and is equal if not, as in certain cases like this one, superior to that of their male counterparts in the battle against fixity.

While Paulette Nardal was a forerunner in terms of reflecting the similitude between the situation of African-Americans and Antilleans living in France in the 1930s, two points of

discussion or faults are raised against Nardal in Sharpley-Whiting's work *Negritude Women* which, in the lines of this chapter's themes of paratext and the institutionalization of *auteures*, partially explain her eclipsing from the Negritude movement. First, and this one is uncontestable, Nardal adopted a neutral, almost positive stance on the 1931 Exposition Coloniale, as Sharpley-Whiting underlines: "For these *évolués* [the thinkers of the Clamart salon], the exposition was an affirmation of black culture expression, as African artwork, music, and such were lauded in grandiose displays. No longer could the contributions of Africa, that "dark continent" from which they were all descended, to the world of culture be denied" (52-3). The participants of the Clamart salon's positive reaction to the Exposition Coloniale is doubly problematic: as natives themselves, they clearly felt separated from the people who were on display at the Exposition, therefore considering themselves as "evolved Others," ultimately confirming that the display strategy put in place by Maréchal Lyautey had been highly effective. Secondly, their denial of the fixed exoticized and eroticized image of the Exposition's Others and of its use as a commodity (while natives themselves were displayed as commodities bringing "contributions" to the Empire) points to an early institutionalization of these immigrant writers in France.

The Nardal sisters' stance on the 1931 Exposition Coloniale revealed a wavering intellectual position regarding the history of colonialism and the supposed benefits of France's *mission civilisatrice* in Africa and the Caribbean. In addition to their lack of condemnation of the Exposition, the Nardal sisters also declared the Bois de Vincennes display a perfect example of French and Caribbean cultures living together, a vision diametrically opposed to that of their peers in the Negritude movement. Shireen Lewis explains in *Race, Culture, and Identity: Francophone West African and Caribbean Literature and Theory from Négritude to Créolité*:

> [Nardal] declared that she and the women on her review had passed through a period of revolt, and had come out more mature. They believed that everything was relative and were not declaring war against "Latin culture" nor on the white world in general but believed in adopting a "middle-ground" position. Their "middle-ground" position vis-à-vis French culture together with their failure to articulate a politics of resistance against colonialism infuriated Etienne Léro, who dismissed their review as "rose water." (63)

Martiniquan intellectual Etienne Léro, co-founder of the *Légitime Défense* ("Self-Defense") literary review in 1932, was a strong opponent of Doudouism, a popular form of Antillean literature that displayed extreme exoticism as inherited from the region's colonial history.[75] Léro was equally a critic of the Martiniquan caste system, and along with René Ménil, Léro declared in the *Légitime Défense* preface/manifesto: "Issus de la bourgeoisie de couleur française, qui est une des choses les plus tristes de ce globe, nous déclarons … que nous entendons, traîtres à cette classe, aller aussi loin que possible dans la voie de la trahison. Nous crachons sur tout ce qu'ils aiment, vénèrent, sur tout ce dont ils tirent nourriture et joie" (2).[76] Far from solely reflecting Nardal's compliance with the French Martiniquan caste system that Léro abhorred, his refusal to publish Paulette Nardal's piece on the 1931 Colonial Exhibition is as much an indication of her partial institutionalization as a Francophone author (resulting in a flawed judgment of the Exposition), as it is symbolic of her being subjected to a male paratext determining the value of her work.

Instead of siding with the critics of essentialism and fixity, Nardal's "middle-ground position" demonstrated her fluctuating between the two poles of the French-Martiniquan debate, a position which became instrumental in her eclipsing from the founding of Negritude by the male architects of the movement. Léro's dismissal of her work was not essentially based on her lack of judgment regarding the Expo: his editing additionally reflected the gender binary opposition that plagued the Negritude movement. Like Léro and Ménil, Nardal originated from

the Martiniquan bourgeoisie and was aware of its flaws regarding the conditions of Antilleans: "As a member of the black bourgeoisie whose civil-servant father suffered discrimination at the hands of the French government, Nardal was keenly aware of the racial caste system – divided into *mulâtre, nègre* and métis, among other racial designations – that existed in the French West Indies and, importantly, was created and stoked by the Metropole" (Sharpley-Whiting 72). In this sense, Nardal and Léro's critique of the Martiniquan caste system was similar. However, Sharpley-Whiting's hinting at the persistence of the caste system in the Metropole here reveals the subaltern position of Antillean women in Paris, inherited from their "native" social system. Women were not offered equal consideration in 1930s Black Paris, an intellectual sub-city where Frantz Fanon's stabbing theories on gender and race begun to appeal to the Negritude thinkers, and where racial and gender castes were a reality, even for those exiled Antilleans. The deeply ingrained social norms of Antillean culture – that were in fact partially created during the colonial era – followed these intellectuals to Paris, and truly influenced their conceptualization of gender and race to the point where they held back any advancement that could have been made on these notions. Frantz Fanon's heavy critique of Mayotte Capécia's *Je suis martiniquaise* placed the author in a position deemed unworthy of the Negritude movement, as she – according to Fanon – advocated for the "lactification" of her race in her narrative devoted to a Martiniquan heroine's longing after a French man (see note 53).

Nardal's ambiguous stance on the Exposition Coloniale can be explained as resulting from colonialist indoctrination and the influence of the Antillean caste system. Yet her stance on the role of Black women in the Paris intellectual realm never wavered. Reflecting on her own absence from the founding triad of Negritude, Paulette Nardal in a 1963 interview voices her discontent and, as Shireen Lewis underlines in *Race, Culture, and Identity*, "her remarks

demonstrate her gender consciousness and her recognition of the role gender played in the silencing of black women's intellectual work" (56). In truth, Sharpley-Writing's sweeping statement that "a race literature imbued with a feminine-gendered particularity is missing from Nardal's analyses of the African American literary tradition," is in retrospect an exaggerated statement. In an early edition of *La Revue du Monde Noir*, Nardal published a piece entitled "Une Noire parle à Cambridge et à Genève," in which she writes at length about Grace Walker, the first African-American female intellectual to give a lecture at Cambridge.[77] Grace Walker went on to become a contributor and an editor for *La Revue*. Paulette Nardal published in the *Revue* the ties the Clamart salon was keeping with female writers in the United States and clearly attended their lectures and publicized their writing. Nardal was always a defender of the feminist cause and proudly advocated for a Pan-African feminist bond, in spite of the stronger intellectual attraction she displayed at the onset of her career towards the male thinkers of the Harlem Renaissance.

The Nardal sisters were eclipsed from the founding of the Negritude movement for several reasons, one being their very status as women writers. While Paulette Nardal's conception of the 1931 Colonial Exhibition has proven to be problematic considering her intellectual affiliations, there undoubtedly remains a gender bias in her eclipsing from the movement by male Martiniquan intellectuals, particularly Etienne Léro. The revolutionary work in ethnic and gender studies performed by the Nardal sisters was deemed unworthy and marked as obsolete as part of a fixed gender dialectic that continued well through the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, as demonstrated with Suzanne Césaire and her subjection to André Breton and Daniel Maximin's masculinist preconceptions of gender, limiting the early battle of Others against fixity.

b) Suzanne Césaire and her Introducers: Text and Context

The place of Other female writers in today's Metropolitan literary market is challenged by the foundations created by the male thinkers of Negritude, Antillanité and Créolité, and remains an intrinsic component of the fixed identity trend mentioned in Chapter I. While studies devoted to the Nardal sisters are sparse and scattered (Sharpley-Whiting and Lewis's are unique), Suzanne Césaire has become in the Creole literary world a topic of choice: the feminine qualities of her persona and her writing have been emphasized to the point of acting as a counter-effect to the various attempts at rehabilitating her role in the founding of the Negritude movement. Upon his encounter with Suzanne Césaire, Surrealist André Breton was struck by her beauty, as he describes her in his preface to Aimé Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*: "Suzanne Césaire, belle comme la flamme du punch" ("Suzanne Césaire, beautiful like the glow of burning punch" 15). In his poem "Pour Madame," published in the third *Tropiques* volume and translated in *The Great Camouflage*, Breton considers the complexion of Martiniquan women as "entre le jour et la nuit" ("between day and night"), explained by their warming up next to the "cacaoyer, caféier, vanille" ("coconut, coffee, vanilla") trees, before finally declaring his finding of absolute feminine beauty in Suzanne Césaire's "visage de cendre blanche et de braises" ("a face of white ash and embers" 41, Walker 48).[78] During her lifetime, in Breton's comments upon their first encounter, or long after her death in Daniel Maximin's re-edition of *The Great Camouflage*, Césaire has been treated as the quintessential "natural" woman whose beauty – always figuratively attached to the environment and geography of Martinique – surpassed the fame of her writings (seven pieces in *Tropiques*). In this sense, Suzanne Césaire and Sarah Baartman were and are both objectified in the male-directed process of *mise-en-scène*: Baartman's dissected body came to represent the hypersexualized Other woman in nineteenth century France

and Césaire's ultra-feminized persona as wife and mother eventually eclipsed her avant-garde work as a founder of Negritude.

In this section, I observe the manner in which Suzanne Césaire has been consistently introduced as the archetypal Caribbean woman, whether in Breton's reflections upon meeting her in the 1940s, or in Daniel Maximin's preface and paratext to *The Great Camouflage, Writings of Dissent (1941-1945), Suzanne Césaire* published in 2009. What Breton and Maximin have in common is their inability to un-fix Suzanne Césaire from her role as "muse" to her husband Aimé and the Negritude movement as a whole, and rehabilitate her as a gender-unspecified thinker and poet. Unlike the Nardal sisters – in particular Paulette and her feminist ventures in *Women in the City*, a revue she created after her return to Martinique– Suzanne Césaire's gender does not come into account when considering her work. Césaire's work is not feminist but in the vein of the Nardal project, vowed to create a Pan-African bond even though in her publications, the dreams of common African roots have been replaced with a vivid refocusing on the island of Martinique itself. In this sense, Césaire herself began an extricating movement outside of the sole focus of Negritude, towards a certain fluidity of Antillanité, prefiguring the works of Edouard Glissant as evidenced in her conclusion to "Malaise d'une civilisation:"

> Il ne s'agit point d'un retour en arrière, de la résurrection d'un passé africain que nous avons appris à connaître et à respecter. Il s'agit au contraire, d'une mobilisation de toutes les forces vives mêlées sur cette terre où la race est le résultat du brassage le plus continu; il s'agit de prendre conscience du formidable amas d'énergies diverses que nous avons jusqu'ici enfermées en nous-mêmes. Nous devons maintenant les employer dans leur plénitude, sans déviation et sans falsification. Tant pis pour ceux qui nous croient des rêveurs. (48-9)[79]

In *Race, Gender and Comparative Black Modernism*, Jennifer Wilks paints a portrait of Césaire's work in relation to Edouard Glissant's work on Créolité, which he elaborated decades later. While the works of Glissant have proven groundbreaking in terms of advancements in

ethnic and mostly Creole philosophy, Wilks demonstrates that Césaire's works are not far removed from Glissant's thought process and can in fact be considered as precursors. Focusing on "Malaise d'une civilisation," Césaire's last publication in 1942, Wilks points out: "Césaire's writing … emerges as "modern" and "prophetic" when it acknowledges the multiple cultural sources that complicate reducing the Martiniquan to the Froebian *homme-plante*. Through this acknowledgement, Césaire no longer echoes colonial stereotypes and instead anticipates the post-Negritude, postcolonial work of theorist Edouard Glissant" (120).

Césaire's counterwork on Leo Froebius' essentialist *homme-plante* theory is also mentioned in Daniel Maximin's preface to *The Great Camouflage*, albeit under exacerbated feminine traits:

> Au-delà de ces analyses et de quelques interprétations datées, il faut imaginer Suzanne Césaire heureuse de conquérir son antillanité de femme-plante … Heureuse d'écrire ses injonctions d'écrire et d'aimer, pour elle-même, pour son amour, pour son peuple … Heureuse de porter en écriture le rythme et la mesure de son *anima*, sa puissance féminine… (19-20)[80]

The overly emphasized feminine qualities in this paragraph accentuate a lesser place in the Negritude movement for Césaire than what is at first anticipated in Maximin's writing. The repetition of the words "love" and "happy" place Césaire in another category of writers, one that is guided by sensations over intellect, by womanly traits over gender-unspecified theorizing. The precursory qualities of Suzanne Césaire's writings are therefore diminished in favor of a more traditional, womanly image of the writer.

Maximin carries on in his preface with a description of Suzanne Césaire's body, assimilating her physical traits and ailing body to the land of Martinique. In this preface entitled "Suzanne Césaire, Sun-Filled Fountain," Maximin chooses to first introduce Césaire the woman, before Césaire the intellectual: "En ce temps-là, sa beauté et sa puissance solaires visibles dans

l'éclat de ses yeux et ses éclairs de chevelure révélaient aussi une fragilité de son corps de liane trop peu posé ou reposé. Un corps propice aux éruptions fertiles mais dévoré d'un enfer interne, de la pleurésie grave de cette année-là – sauvée par une quatrième grossesse régénératrice…" (8).[81] Once again, the words used by Maximin are objectifying and fixating Césaire in her gender role as a woman: her "fertile" body, whose "eruptions" are reminiscent of the volcano of Martinique, along with its "pleurisy," countered by a life-saving pregnancy – once more confining her to her role as a mother all the while likening her to her land, a distinction she had in fact been struggling with in her own writing. Whether or not Césaire's personal life (her marriage, her family, her illness) should be mentioned in a preface to *The Great Camouflage* is not the main question here, but it is certainly of interest when it is repetitively used to categorize her as someone other than an author. Césaire's personal life and femininity are here problematically used as tools to liken her (not her persona, but her body) to her native land almost seventy years after Surrealist André Breton made that assimilation.

Jennifer Wilks' work sets out to rehabilitate Suzanne Césaire among the founding fathers of Negritude. She writes: "If, as Léon-Gontran Damas asserted in his 'Holy Trinity' of Francophone modernism, Senghor is Negritude's Father, Aimé Césaire its son, and Damas its Holy Spirit, why should one not posit their contemporary and collaborator Suzanne Césaire as the movement's Madonna: its singular feminine presence, related to the Trinity but unquestionably separate?" (109). Wilks masterly points out that Suzanne Césaire's disappearance from the history of the movement was not caused by a significant event, but rather by some form of hijacking from within the movement itself. In pointing out Damas as the man responsible for Negritude's "Holy Trinity" definition, Wilks insists on the role played by male

entities within the literature sphere that fixate women writers in the "muse" and "mother" categories of their patriarchal hierarchy.

Wilks goes on to reminisce about the words André Breton used when he first met Suzanne Césaire on the tarmac of Fort-de-France's airport, noting nothing but her exotic beauty: "Whereas Aimé Césaire is Breton's Caribbean double, Suzanne Césaire is the Frenchman's 'tropical Nadja,' another womanly embodiment of surrealism. The contrast is all the more striking for its placement just prior to Breton's meditation on the poetry of Martinique's botanic profusion" (111). Breton's fast analogy of Suzanne Césaire with the exotic, along with Maximin's excessive motherly and natural depictions of the poet in a contemporary work (his preface is dated 2009) are in fact tied to a trend that started in Paris at the time of Aimé Césaire's publication of *Cahier du retour au pays natal*.

c) Strategic Essentialism and the Negritude Movement

In the vein of the Surrealists' display of difference at the *Vérité* exhibit, the Negritude method revolved around an essentialist idea of humanity, which instead of integrating France's colonial Other within the Metropolitan space as text as well as in the text itself, set him apart in his own dimension. In reappropriating and glorifying the term "nègre," and in emphasizing the irrevocable bond between his "Négritude" and nature itself, Aimé Césaire in the terms of this work was a participant in fixating the Other in a separate ethnic literary sphere. In his *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, first published in 1939 and then revised and published in its definitive version in 1956, Césaire embraces his Otherness in a long autobiographical poem that culminates in an emphatic glorification of (his) Negritude:

> Ma Négritude n'est pas une pierre, sa surdité ruée contre la clameur du jour
> ma Négritude n'est pas une taie d'eau morte sur l'œil mort de la terre
> ma Négritude n'est ni une tour ni une cathédrale

> elle plonge dans la chair rouge du sol
> elle plonge dans la chair ardente du ciel
> elle troue l'accablement opaque de sa droite patience (117)[82]

Indian theorist Gayatri Spivak coined the term "strategic essentialism" in her 1987 essay "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography," pinpointing the solidarity expressed in the subaltern group around their particular essence (essence of the Other, be it woman, worker, non-white) in order to infiltrate the élite consciousness, "a *strategic* use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest" (214). Essentialism, be it strategic or not, is problematic as it implies a fragmentation of the groups, "us" versus "them," which entices fixity on both ends of the ethnic spectrum. While Spivak herself has abandoned the term because of its misuse, this notion will remain in the background of this dissertation as a potential pitfall for the authors and filmmakers of this study, notably with the case of *banlieue* cinema in Chapter III.[83] In this chapter, "strategic essentialism" is used according to the principle that in trying to glorify the Other, the Negritude movement (particularly Césaire, Gontrand and Damas) focused their efforts on the male Other, constrating his superiority with the weaknesses and flaws of the female Other, whether these were approached in the physical or intellectual domain.

"Strategic essentialism" as first defined by Spivak is one of two problematic tactics revealed by Negritude in its fight against fixity, the other being the use of prefaces written by established Metropolitan authors. In her study of the subaltern consciousness in *In Other Worlds*, Spivak extends the master/slave dialectic by emphasizing the Subaltern Studies Group's constant definition of itself in contrast with the elite and the bourgeoisie: "Here in vague Hegelian limnings, is the anti-humanist and anti-positivist position that is always the desire for/of (the power of the Other) that produces an image of the self. If this is generalized … it is the subaltern who provides the model for a general theory of consciousness. And yet, since the

'subaltern' cannot appear without the thought of 'élite,' the generalization is by definition incomplete" (203). Two texts stand out as examples of this dialectic: Breton's "Un Grand poète noir" (preface to Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, 1947 edition) and Sartre's "Orphée Noir" (preface to Senghor's *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie noire et malgache*, 1948). To have eminent white voices such as Breton's or Sartre's introduce the works of the first Negritude poets to the Metropolitan intellectual sphere was meant as a form of integration of the Other via an opening movement on the part of the French writers; in truth, the use of prefaces reinforced the codependence between established authors and incoming Negritude writers, the codependence of the One and its Other.

Jules-Rosette asserts in "Jean-Paul Sartre and the philosophy of Negritude: Race, self and society:" "By collaborating with Black intellectuals, Sartre attempted to frame, promote, and lend credibility to their causes. He also used their work as a source of support for his philosophy of the oppressed" (267). In both prefaces however, the Black poet is celebrated for his uniqueness and his sensuality among other "natural" traits that purportedly set him apart from the French metropolitan literary sphere. In *Orphée Noir*, Sartre fixes the Noir in a realm of sensations when assessing: "On ne saurait mieux nous prévenir que la Négritude n'est pas un état, ni un ensemble défini de vices et de vertus, de qualités intellectuelles et morales, mais une certaine attitude affective à l'égard du monde" (Sartre, XXIX).[84] In setting the colonial Other apart as a primitive being relying solely on sensations, Sartre does not exactly integrate but rather excludes the Negritude poet from the main literary sphere. This can be explained in part by the fact that Sartre's opinion of the Negritude movement was that it would eventually disintegrate, as Jules-Rosette points out in her study: "[For Sartre] Negritude is poised between the image of exotic abandon and the obligation of combat. Unable to reconcile its two poles, it can only self-

destruct, for this idyllic Africa is also the emblem of poverty and oppression and a reminder of the colonizer's guilt and remorse" (271). Despite Sartre's explicit stance on the future of the Negritude movement, his involvement enabled the works of Césaire, Senghor and many others to be considered as worthy of entering the main literary sphere. This relationship was deemed crucial at the time even though it highlighted not only the barrier that separated the minority of Negritude thinkers from the established white intellectuals of the canon, but also the beginning of an institutionalization of Other writers in French literature.[85]

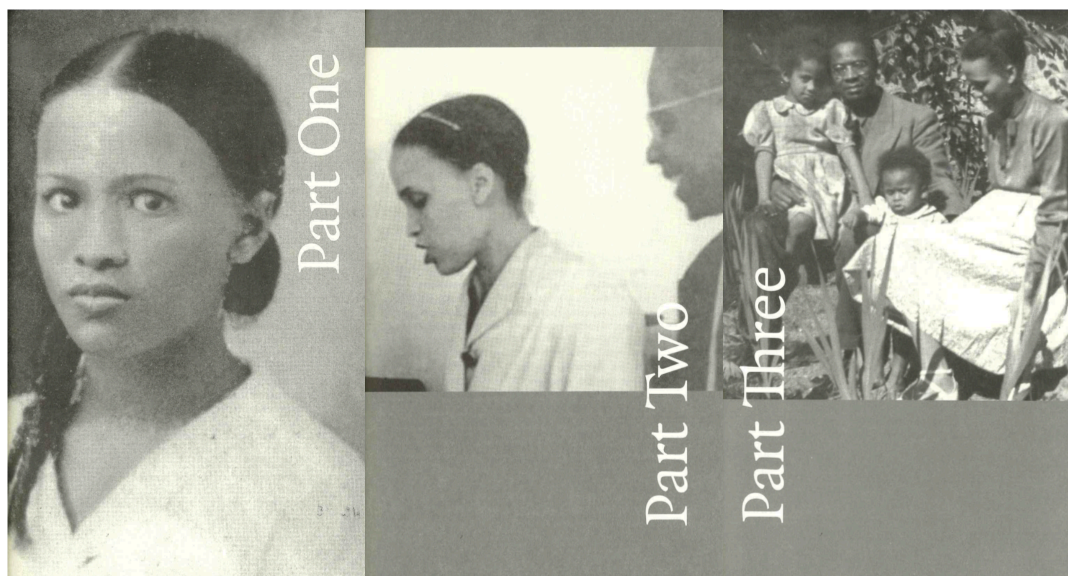
This barrier ("us" established intellectuals vs "them" aspiring writers) was reproduced within the Negritude movement, as we have seen with the cases of the Nardal sisters' eclipsing from the founding triad, and Suzanne Césaire's exacerbated exoticism/ naturalism when her works were introduced by male colleagues (in this chapter, Breton and Maximin). In addition, women in Francophone literature have been subjected to another form of fixity when considering their publications' paratext. Richard Watts underlines in "Senghor's Prefaces between the Colonial and the Postcolonial" that the paratext's primary function at the time of the first postcolonial authors was to give a larger audience immediate access to their oeuvres via the use of visuals and prefaces:

> The paratext to colonized and postcolonial literatures translates - in a metaphorical sense - the text in abbreviated textual form (prefaces, dedications, dust jacket copy, etc.) as well as in iconic form (cover art). This gives readers who might not otherwise be immediately able to "read" the text's cultural difference access to it. This makes the text, lest we forget the commercial imperatives of the paratext, a more approachable and desirable commodity. (76)

In both editions of Daniel Maximin's *Le Grand camouflage* – the French 2009 Seuil edition and the North American 2012 Wesleyan Press edition – the essential boundary between Suzanne Césaire' personal life and her text is crossed, as photographs of herself and her family are used to effectively blur that boundary, rendering the text itself more "approachable" and "desirable."

In the 1978 re-edition of the entire *Tropiques* collection, the frontispiece is a picture of young Suzanne Césaire, void of any subtext besides her name: she is dressed simply and looking directly at the camera. This picture is reproduced in Daniel Maximin's edition of *The Great Camouflage*, as part of a strategic collection of images of Césaire. In the 2012 Wesleyan University Press (North American) edition, the picture of young Suzanne Césaire opens the first chapter devoted to her own writings of dissidence in the revue *Tropiques*. The next chapter opens with a photo of an older Suzanne Césaire with husband Aimé in the foreground, entering the picture. This chapter is a collection of essays by Maximin himself, but also by Breton and René Ménil on the wider movement of Negritude (clearly the photograph reflects the appearance of intellectual and knowledgeable men in Suzanne Césaire's life). The final chapter opens with a picture of the Césaire family and is comprised of poems written by Aimé and their daughter Ina (in the 2009 edition, the photograph of the couple opens this last chapter while the picture of the Césaire family closes it).

Figure 2.2: Photos introducing each chapter of Daniel Maximin's North-American edition of *The Great Camouflage*



The evolution of Suzanne Césaire in photographs (young woman writer, intellectual's wife, mother) reproduced in Maximin's edition while annexed to the main text bears the responsibility of introducing each step of her life, anthropologically influencing the reception of her actual writing. In *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, Gérard Genette studies the use of three chronologically placed pictures of Marcel Proust in the 1954 edition of *A la recherche du temps perdu* and explains:

> Pour le lecteur, qui accorde certainement moins d'attention à ces dates réelles indiquées sur les rabats qu'à l'allure des portraits eux-mêmes, une liaison significative s'établit irrésistiblement, non tant avec la chronologie d'écriture de l'œuvre qu'avec la chronologie interne du récit, c'est-à-dire l'âge du héros. Ces trois portraits évoquent donc pour lui à la fois le vieillissement de Proust et celui du héros-narrateur, ce qui tire inévitablement la *Recherche* vers un statut d'autobiographie. (33)[86]

In the same manner as the 1954 edition of Proust's *Recherche,* the photographs of Suzanne Césaire in Maximin's edition are chronological paratexts, framing the evolution of the texts, while at the same time rendering her works more accessible to the public as it takes the shape not of a collection of literary essays, but of a biography.

Both the French and the North-American editions of Maximin's *Le Grand camouflage* concretely turn Césaire's intellectual contribution to the movement of Negritude into what Richard Watts calls "a more approachable and desirable commodity." One additional picture originally found in the 2009 Seuil edition is left out of the 2012 North American translation: a photograph of several male and female intellectuals including Suzanne Césaire, placed at the beginning of the second section of Maximin's *Le Grand camouflage* that reads: "Surrealist group gathered at the home of Pierre Matisse. At the back, from left to right: Matta, Tanguy, Aimé Césaire, André Breton and Calas; the men sitting are Denis de Rougemont, Marcel Duchamp and Esteban Frances; the women sitting: Elisa Breton (in the armchair), Suzanne Césaire, Jackie

Matisse, Patricia Matta and Alexine Duchamp" (97). Why this photo has been left out of the Wesleyan University Press edition is unclear, and potentially reinforces the notion that the publisher's intention in this case has been to render Suzanne Césaire more accessible to a North American audience, obliterating her participation in the Surrealist movement along with her intellectual nature in favor of a more feminized and nurturing image of the author.

Figure 2.3: Additional photograph in the Seuils edition of *Le Grand camouflage*

Groupe surréaliste réuni chez Pierre Matisse. On reconnaît derrière, de gauche à droite : Matta, Tanguy, Aimé Césaire, André Breton et Calas ; les hommes assis sont Denis de Rougemont, Marcel Duchamp et Esteban Frances ; les femmes assises : Elisa Breton (dans le fauteuil), Suzanne Césaire, Jackie Matisse, Patricia Matta et Alexine Duchamp.

The walls of paratext were erected around Negritude women in the same way the walls of the Palais de la Porte Dorée enclose and guide the spectator in the display of the postcolonial urban Other. What Negritude women could not achieve because of a male-dominated literary sphere that reproduced biases found in the main sphere, contemporary authors Nora Hamdi and Nina Bouraoui manage with a balanced movement, a two-fold equilibrium between the anthropological use of their persona in the publishing of their works, and their defiance of

conventional gender roles in the text proper. Whether she is writing from a male point of view in *Avant les hommes* or from a homosexual point of view in *Garçon Manqué*, Nina Bouraoui uses the tropes of dissimulation and subterfuge in order to achieve what I qualify in this work a gender-unspecified place of writing. Nora Hamdi in *Des Poupées et des anges* uses similar literary devices in order to convey the absurdity of gender stereotypes in immigrant families, setting her discourse against the polar opposites of the male Algerian culture and the feminized French culture, in the same manner as Bouraoui.

The paratext in their case has been assuaged compared to their predecessors; it has enhanced the modern image of the Other woman – urban and Westernized– and through the fluidity of their gender challenging narratives, they have managed to overcome the stifling effect of the walls of paratext. Bouraoui's *Garçon manqué* and *Avant les hommes* are gender queer in nature; Hamdi's *Des Poupées et des anges* is challenging of gender roles and desacralizing of the era of fixity in immigrant households. This shift in representations of the Other in and around Metropolitan texts is permitted by a strategy of institutionalization of immigrant women writers on the publishing side, and within the text, a gender-unspecified or gender challenging narrative demonstrated through the use of physical movement in and out of the fixed urban space and gender constructs, notably those of the female body.

2) Beyond the Walls of Paratext: Challenging Gender Role Representations

a) The Calixthe Beyala Case

Before delving into the works of Nora Hamdi and Nina Bouraoui and their use of the paratext, it is essential to mention the Calixthe Beyala case, as the French-Cameroonian author has been used by the media to affirm the control of the French literary institutions over Francophone writers, and also to justify their presence as the counter-balancing element of

classic French Metropolitan/ white literature. Nicky Hitchcott explains in "Calixthe Beyala: Prizes, Plagiarism, and 'Authenticity'": "On the one hand, she is something of a postcolonial celebrity: a prolific and successful author who is regularly invited to contribute to television talk shows. On the other, she is reviled as a literary fraud who lacks a sense of propriety" (100). Calixthe Beyala was born in Douala, Cameroon and moved to France at the age of seventeen. A prolific author, Beyala received the Prix François Mauriac de l'Académie Française for *Assèze l'Africaine* in 1994 and the Grand Prix du Roman de l'Académie Française in 1996 for *Les Honneurs perdus*.

Calixthe Beyala has over the years become a figure of dissent. She was accused of plagiarism in her popular novel *Le Petit Prince de Belleville* after the the Académie Française pointed out the uncanny resemblance of her narrative to Romain Gary's *La Vie devant soi*: she was brought to court to defend herself and her work, and was found guilty.[87] Marilyn Randall in *Pragmatic Plagiarism* writes:

> Having been previously convicted of breach of copyright – a decision she left uncontested - …Beyala shifts the ground of her defense from her own intentions or lack thereof and directly accuses her accusers, appealing to the guilty conscience not only of the institution but of the nation and, as well, of her natural allies, the 'left wing' whom she alienated by her lack of first-world political correctness. (186)

When Beyala reversed the accusation in court in order to defend her case, she in fact revealed the strategic institutionalization to which Francophone women writers, herself included, have been submitted to in their careers: they are used as counterweights to French literature so the institution can claim once again the benefits of the French civilizing mission in the illiterate African colonies, and as such they run the risk of being dismissed shall they for any reason evolve and step out of this codependent relationship. This revelation brought Beyala disgrace in the public media, and she was quickly presented as a national embarrassment. Instead of being

left to disappear, she was turned into a token of resurgent colonial ideology, "Other-ed" once again, yet more forcefully and significantly this time.

Unlike Calixthe Beyala, Nora Hamdi's reputation as an author was not tarnished by accusations of plagiarism. In *Des Poupées et des anges*, one particular passage shows disturbing similarities to an episode of Azouz Begag's childhood as recounted in *Le Gone du Chaâba*. Hamdi, reminiscing the poor living conditions her family was subjected to when first immigrating to France, writes:

> La nuit tombée, lorsque j'allai aux toilettes sans ma lampe de poche, à l'intérieur, j'étais dans le noir total. J'urinais en hâte quand la porte sans verrou s'est ouverte, un pot jaillit plein d'excréments. Sans y croire, je le reçus sur moi. Une voisine arrivée depuis peu avec un bébé ne m'avait pas vue dans le noir. Elle avait balancé la merde sur moi. J'ai crié de toutes mes forces. La femme s'est précipitée pour me sortir de là. Sans tarder, le visage inquiet, ma mère est arrivée. Devant le pot vide par terre et l'odeur qui se dégageait de moi, elle a vite compris la situation. Elle a hurlé sur la femme qui ne cessait de s'excuser. (140-1) [88]

In *Le Gone du Chaâba*, Begag also reminisces the unsanitary living conditions of most Algerian families upon their arrival in the Metropole:

> Laisse tomber la lampe, le temps presse … Dans une obscurité à peu près totale, je m'accroupis au-dessus de la cuve … Une ombre esquisse un geste rapide. Un liquide tiède me noie le visage, inonde ma bouche. Ça sent la pisse. C'est de la pisse! Je pousse un cri étouffé. Ali, mon oncle, vient de me vider son pot de chambre en pleine face… Ma mère et mes sœurs accourent, affolées. (15-16) [89]

Both episodes are similar in gest: the young narrator goes to the communal toilet in the dark, an adult opens the door and unknowingly covers the child in excrements -the adult is horrified and the narrator's mother rushes to the scene to clean up her child. This Hamdi/ Begag case is surely not the only one in French literature of immigration. It could be argued that the authors' similar childhoods in the French slums explain a shared experience and therefore an identical narrative. Then again, the same argument could have been used in favor of Calixthe Beyala, whose narrative of a young African boy is set in the same neighborhood as Romain

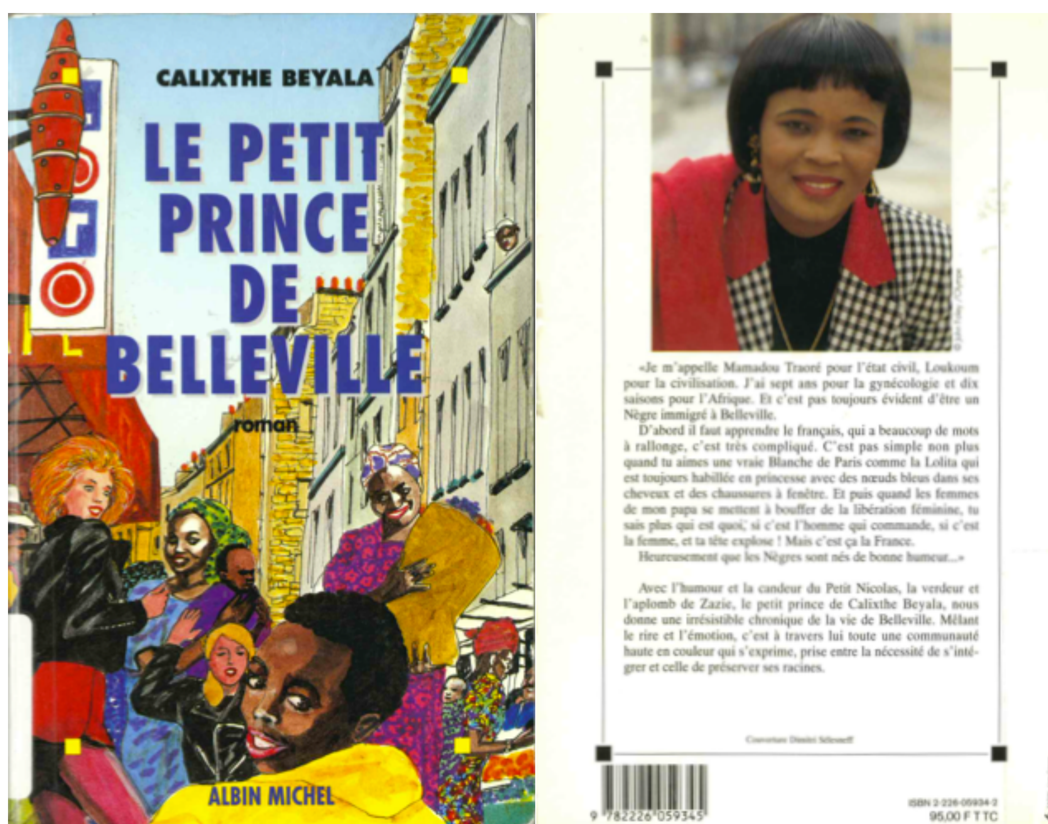
Gary's narrative of a Muslim teenager – the two would have certainly experienced the immigrant neighborhood of Belleville in similar ways. However, if this was common practice, why haven't the French literary authorities accused Hamdi of plagiarism? What elements made Calixthe Beyala an easy target, easier to accuse than Nora Hamdi who – we will see in this section – is presented in her publications as more of a Westernized postcolonial author?

Beyala's "image" as presented in her publications evolved significantly from before to after the trial, from a casual postcolonial author to a self-admitted plagiarist, reinforcing the cultural purpose of institutionalized fixity in the realm of French literary production. Beyala's main publisher, Albin Michel, chose for *Le Petit prince de Belleville* (1992) a front cover drawing that showed the varied ethnic and social background of the story in the Belleville (dominantly African immigrant) neighborhood of Paris, depicting African women in traditional costumes, a prostitute and her pimp, and in the foreground, a young African boy – presumably Mamadou, the hero of the story. The back cover of Beyala's *Petit Prince* includes a picture of the author, her hair straightened and wearing a European blazer.

Beyala's 1992 novel is clearly demarcated by colorful front and back covers. As it is, it would stand out in any French bookstore as "Other," mostly because of the front cover's garish colors and the presence in the foreground of African characters. This alone would guide the reader into a familial story of immigration in Paris. The photo of Beyala chosen for the back cover is very passive in comparison to more recent, post-trial photographs picturing the author as more independent and less Westernized. In *Packaging Post/Coloniality*, Richard Watts comments on the use of photographs in publications explaining that in contemporary works, the photograph of the author is used as a "logo that on its own is capable of placing the work in a particular literary field, which is to say targeting a readership" (32). However, in colonial and

postcolonial works, as is the case with Beyala (and was the case with Suzanne Césaire), the photographs of Other authors are meant to place them in a designed space that is outside of the main literary sphere, by demonstrating their difference (by the obvious color of their skin) while at the same time confirming their belonging to the French literary sphere via their Westernized clothing.[90] The pre-trial photo of Beyala in 1992 fits this model of depicting a Francophone author, outside of the main literary sphere yet Westernized in her appearance, therefore admitted in the French literature realm.

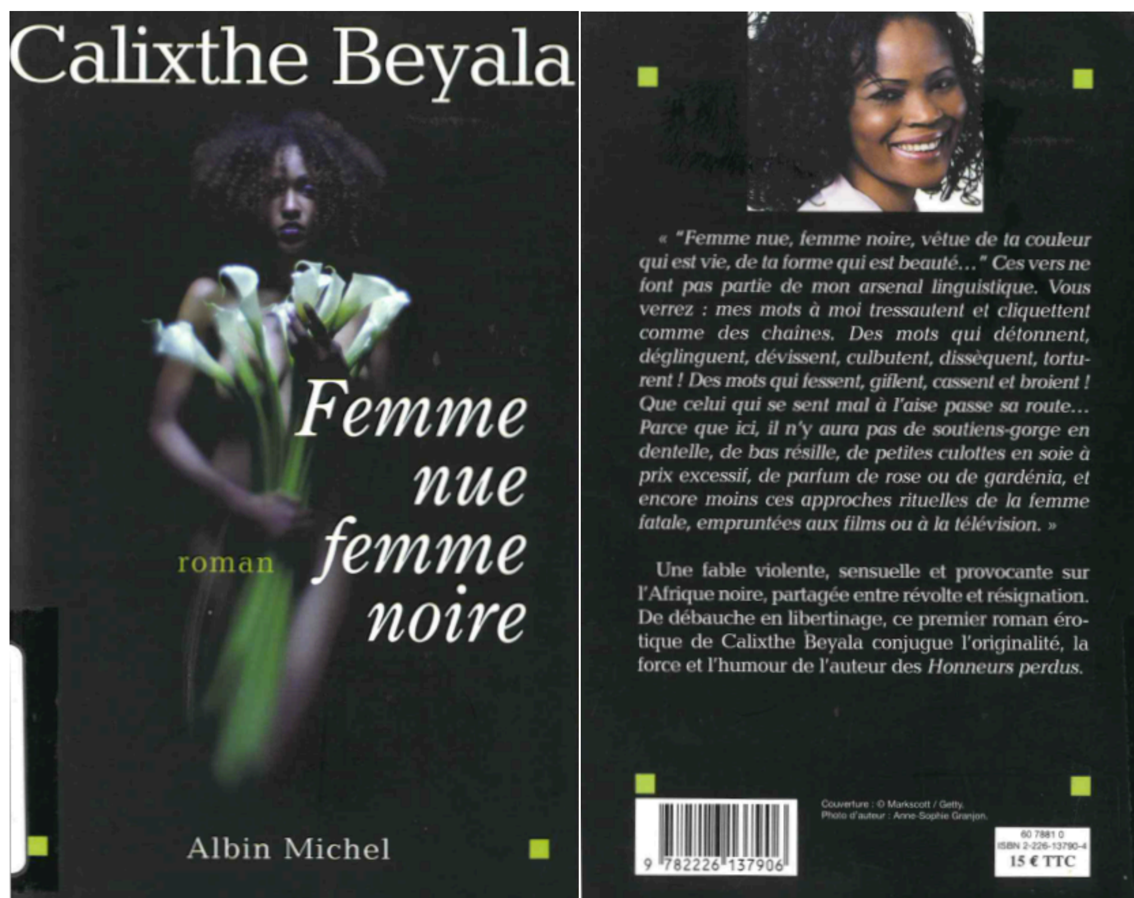
Figure 2.4: Front and back covers for *Le Petit prince de Belleville*, Albin Michel Ed. (1992)



In 2003, Beyala published *Femme nue femme noire*, the tale of a teenage African girl in Cameroon whose exacerbated sexuality leads her into entering a destructive *ménage-à-trois*. The front cover shows a naked Black woman carrying flowers that do not cover her entire body. The back cover includes a headshot of Beyala, hair untied and naturally curly, directing a more

assured look at the camera and a wider smile compared to her 1992 picture. Calixthe Beyala's post-trial image as shown by Albin Michel's Editions works in osmosis with the double-bind that stands at the core of any type of literature: the narrator's voice and its text are often seen as inseparable from the author's identity, therefore gendering - and fixating - the text itself before even opening the book.

Figure 2.5: Front and back covers for *Femme nue femme noire*, Albin Michel Ed. (2003)



With *Femme nue femme noire*'s front and back covers, the publisher is giving into this biased connection, and markets Beyala and her work as absolutely Other, broadcasting the image of the oversexualized Black woman on the front cover and the careless plagiarist yet prolific Black female author on the back cover. Beyala herself can be considered guilty of giving into the doubling of the Other woman and the fixity of her image by titling her work *Femme nue femme*

noire after Senghor's celebrated poem published in *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache* in 1948, with a preface by Jean-Paul Sartre. Senghor's poem is known for its essentialist characteristics, constraining the Black woman's image to its resemblance with a virgin natural landscape.[91]

In *Africa and France: Postcolonial Cultures, Migration and Racism*, Dominic Thomas revisits the case of Marie Ndiaye and the controversy that followed her winning of the 2009 literary prize Prix Goncourt for her novel *Trois Femmes Puissantes*, which recounts the separate stories of three women, all set in Africa. Ndiaye, the daughter of a white French mother and a black Senegalese father was – in a different manner than Beyala – turned into a token by both sides of the equation, as Dominic Thomas points out. On one hand, the French literary institutions had begun to demonstrate their inclusiveness of Other authors by awarding the three major French literary prizes to non-white authors in the same year (in 2006, French-Congolese author Alain Mabanckou was awarded the Prix Renaudot for *Mémoires de porc-épic*, French-American author Jonathan Littell's *Les Bienveillantes* received the Grand Prix du Roman de l'Académie Française and French-Canadian Nancy Huston received the Prix Fémina for *Lignes de faille*.); on the other hand, in the same vein of patronage seen earlier in the case of the Nardal sisters and the Fathers of Negritude, Other male writers have appropriated Ndiaye's winning of the Goncourt as a victory, discrediting her work as an author to the profit of her identity as an ethnic Other.[92]

Thomas points to this phenomenon as problematic, as Ndiaye does not consider herself a Francophone African writer, nor has she ever set foot in Africa:

> Perhaps then, what the *World Republic of Letters* has deemed the most authentic, the most "véritable" (authentic) of African works, produced by a writer who exceeds the norms of Frenchness and who as such, though the self-proclaimed "least" African of "Black" writers in France, is nevertheless simultaneously

> equipped with the unquestioned authority of a *native* informer when she writes *about* Africa, and in particular when she writes in the way she does about the continent. (143)

The contemporary Francophone women writers studied in this chapter find themselves, like Marie Ndiaye, occupying this dual position of “native informant” and published French author. When their texts appear under the form of testimonials, as is the case with Samira Bellil’s *Dans l’enfer des tournantes*, these women writers are identified solely as native informants, as the term relates to the notion of the Subaltern in Gayatri Spivak’s *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*. Conversely, in the case of published and institutionally recognized authors such as Ndiaye and Bouraoui, a phenomenon that began with Beyala – but which Beyala did not use to her advantage – is becoming a norm in Metropolitan Francophone literature: women writers of immigrant background are in a process of semi-institutionalization, in which the writer gives into a socially acceptable, Westernized paratext all the while gaining more readership and recognition than she would remaining in the Francophone/ Other zone, thus enabling her narratives to flow out of the walls of paratext.

b) Samira Bellil, Nina Bouraoui and Nora Hamdi: Simulation and Dissimulation

What Nora Hamdi and Nina Bouraoui have in common is a unique authorial identity that is separate from their ethnic and gender identity. Unlike prominent figures of Metropolitan literature *issues de l’immigration* such as Calixthe Beyala or Faïza Guène (a young *beur* author celebrated for her 2004 *banlieue* novel *Kiffe Kiffe demain*), Bouraoui and Hamdi are not as mediatized for their ethnic and gender differences, and their use in the institutionalized cultural fixity of the Other is limited. Both authors’ productions (in print and in online media) do not follow the bind entailed between the author’s identity and the narrative itself: the exacerbated physicality of their texts, added to their use of their own image in the media and their publishers’

strategic use of visual paratext make Bouraoui and Hamdi – among others – artists of movement, actors of fluidity against fixity. Their Westernized image, on par with Beyala's pre-trial appearance, is also to be understood as a strategic means for them as authors to enter the all-French literature realm. In this sense, there exists a dual relationship between the postcolonial author and the institutionalized literature sphere: each beneficiates from the other's existence, and from a process of simulation and dissimulation. In *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981), Jean Baudrillard explains: " Dissimuler est feindre de ne pas avoir ce qu'on a. Simuler est feindre d'avoir ce qu'on a pas" ("To dissimulate is to feign not to have what one has. To simulate is to feign to have what one doesn't have" 12, Glaser 3). In this section, I will demonstrate that publishing techniques combined with the authors' image in the media are part of a subterfuge, or dissimulation process as both strategies imply "feigning" not to belong to the Other, postcolonial realm of literature. In addition, these visual techniques concerning the public image of the author are intrinsically linked to a Westernization process, and therefore also belong to the realm of simulation.

Nora Hamdi and Nina Bouraoui are studied here in contrast with the feminist socio-political movement "Ni Putes Ni Soumises" ("Neither Whores Nor Submissive) that started in France in the early 2000s, and is linked to the publication of Samira Bellil's *Dans l'enfer des tournantes*. In *Taking French Feminism to the Streets*, Brittany Murray and Diane Perpich explain that the movement, headed by political activist Fadela Amara, officially started in 2003 when a group of militant women travelled to twenty-three cities throughout France in order to "address difficult issues related to sexuality, gang rape, discrimination, gender violence, ghettoization, religion and public secularism, extremism, forced marriage, and republican values in an increasingly divided society" (15-6).[93] Before the group took to the streets, Samira Bellil

published *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* (*To Hell and Back: The Life of Samira Bellil*) in 2002, an autobiographical account of multiple gang rapes, torture and shaming in the *banlieues*. Bellil, who was known as the godmother of the NPNS movement, died of stomach cancer in 2004, at the age of thirty-one.[94] Bellil's work falls outside of Baudrillard's concepts of simulation and dissimulation precisely because it is anchored in the reality of a social movement, yet is still essential to this chapter's thesis as it represents an expression of an-Other female identity in movement against the monolithic, institutionalized French identity as it is broadcasted in the media.

Bellil's account, originally told in *banlieue* speech (a combination of spoken French, *verlan*, and Arabic vocabulary), was adapted to "readable" French by its editor Josée Stoquart who writes in the preface: "J'aurais pu choisir d'interviewer Samira et d'écrire moi-même son histoire. J'ai préféré la laisser écrire … En collaborant à l'écriture pour la rendre plus accessible, j'espère avoir respecté au plus près la couleur du récit et la personnalité de Samira" ("I could have chosen to interview Samira and to write her story myself. I chose to let her write… In collaborating on her writing to make it more accessible, I hope I respected the tone of her work and Samira's personality" 7). While Bellil wrote in her acknowledgments: "à Josée … qui, avec une finesse talentueuse, a su polir mon texte tout en le respectant" ("to Josée … who, with great finesse, knew how to polish my writing while respecting it" 3, McNair ix), Alec Hargreaves in his introduction to *Dans l'enfer*'s translation noted:

> This did not prevent Stoquart from adding a preface to the book, in which she portrayed the sexual violence of young men in the banlieues as a consequence of their being caught between Islamic fundamentalism and the cheap pornography of Western consumer society. Bellil's narrative made no reference to Islamic fundamentalism, but Stoquart's representation of events in those terms was given widespread currency by journalists, many of whom may have seen in the preface a shortcut that saved them the trouble of reading Bellil's text. (xviii)

Hargreaves here points to the same guiding principle of the postcolonial paratext that has eclipsed the works of Suzanne Césaire and Calixthe Beyala. Bellil, Hamdi and Bouraoui are therefore studied here in terms of postcolonial Westernization, publishing and patronage, in relation to the aforementioned examples of Césaire and Beyala.

All three women are writing from a place that is quintessentially external to the main realm of French literature, despite the fact that their texts, composed in the French language, relate their lived experiences on the French territory as French nationals. Bellil's text is an autobiography, "translated" by a non-immigrant, native French editor, Stoquart; Bouraoui's texts *Garçon Manqué*, *Poupée Bella* and *Mes mauvaises pensées* are considered semi-autobiographies, and presented in the form of novels by the author herself. Bellil grew up in the violence of the *banlieues* in a first-generation immigrant family ("Mes parents sont des immigrés, très européanisés" 'My immigrant parents are very Westernized' 35, Salvodon and Gavarini 29); Bouraoui was born in Brittany (her father is Algerian, her mother is French) and grew up in Algeria before returning to Rennes as a teenager – she eventually graduated from the prestigious Sorbonne University in Paris. Nora Hamdi, the daughter of first-generation immigrants, grew up in Sartrouville, a Parisian *banlieue,* and did not graduate high school. She attended night classes at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and was a painter for several years before turning to writing (Hamdi's *La Couleur dans les mains* is semi-autobiographical).[95]

Apart from the editing strategies used by their respective publishing houses, twenty-first century technologies have enabled both Hamdi and Bouraoui to take charge of their own paratext. In the same spirit as the Nardal sisters and their "Ce que nous voulons faire" disclaimer printed at the beginning of *La Revue du Monde Noir* (see p. 6), Hamdi and Bouraoui have taken control of a certain portion of their public image via professional websites and Facebook pages.

Nora Hamdi's website (www.norahamdi.com) offers different tabs for the visitor to navigate the author's resume, publications and upcoming events. On Nina Bouraoui's Facebook page, one can find regular entries from the author herself, as well as links to her upcoming book releases. The paratext that surrounded Samira Bellil's release of *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* was extremely political and, unlike Hamdi and Bouraoui's controlled paratexts, constantly linked to the stigmatized *banlieue*, riddled with stereotypes of Otherness and violence. Bellil's account does not exactly fit in the realm of French literature as it belonged to a wider movement of testimonies requested by the NPNS movement and used in a political context. Fadela Amara, leader of NPNS explained: "We think that if women and young girls in the *quartiers* are given the opportunity to assert themselves by participating in collective actions, they will play an important role in changing the *quartiers* … We think that silence and isolation are the principal sources of oppression" (23). This external paratext that framed her narrative placed her work in the category of testimonials, a category that is, according to Spivak's notion of the subaltern, disregarded in literature when compared to the novelized form of autobiography.

In *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak questions the position of the native informant in the realm of authorship, more specifically that of the *female* native informant. Spivak begins her second chapter "Literature" by assessing the superior position of women who are published as follows:

> When publishing women are from the dominant "culture," they sometimes share, with male authors, the tendency to create an inchoate "other" (often female), who is not even a native informant but a piece of material evidence once again establishing the Northwestern European subject as "the same." Such textual tendencies are the condition and effect of received ideas. Yet, against all straws in the wind, one must write in the hope that it is not a deal done forever, that it is possible to resist from within. (113)

According to this argument, Nora Hamdi and Nina Bouraoui occupy a dual position in the Metropolitan literature realm: they are considered native informants because of their familial background and ethnicity, yet their status as published authors places them in a privileged position, one that Samira Bellil could not attain. Bellil suffered from three forms of paratext: the social movement of NPNS, the adaptation of her words by her editor, and eventually a preface written by the editor herself. In truth, Bellil's adapted, translated account secured her voice as that of the native informant, all the while placing her in the category of patronized authors in the tradition of Fanon (Jean-Paul Sartre) and Césaire (André Breton), without affording her the authority and popularity of her predecessors. How have today's publishing techniques and use of the paratext in the case of semi-institutionalized authors such as Hamdi and Bouraoui evolved in terms of representation and use of gender roles in French postcolonial literature? How do these authors navigate – through their writing – the double position of the native informant and the semi-institutionalized author?

Nina Bouraoui

Nina Bouraoui, French-Algerian author who lived in Algeria until the age of fourteen before moving to France, has never hidden her sexual identity – she is a lesbian – and her semi-autobiographical novels bear the traces of her coming-out (particularly *Garçon Manqué*, a novel retracing her childhood dressed as a boy, *Poupée Bella* which recounts her search for a lover in Parisian gay nightclubs, as well as *Mes mauvaises Pensées* and *La Vie heureuse*). Unlike Nora Hamdi or Calixthe Beyala, Nina Bouraoui - French-born author *issue de* Algerian immigration – does not only write about the condition of the ethnic Other in Paris. The wide range of narratives that constitute the body of her work has caused Bouraoui to become an "accepted" postcolonial woman writer in an otherwise extremely institutionalized literary realm quick to judge and

condemn Other writers, as seen previously in the case of Calixthe Beyala.[96] Unlike Nora Hamdi or Faïza Guène, whose narratives are ruled by an insight on *banlieue* life, Bouraoui extends her narrative of immigration and her bicultural background (*La Voyeuse interdite*, *Garçon manqué*) into the realm of sexuality and gender identity with novels told from a queer voice: a younger Bouraoui in the semi-autobiographical *La Vie heureuse* (2002), a lesbian writer (Bouraoui herself) in *Poupée Bella* (2004), a psychoanalytical monologue in *Mes mauvaises pensées* (2005) and lately a gay teenage boy in *Avant les hommes* (2007). In a true publishing tour de force, Bouraoui has gained recognition from her peers in the Francophone world and a well institutionalized French literary sphere while touching on the most taboo topics in Metropolitan literature and culture: immigration, integration and homosexuality.

In her article "Freedom from Oneself: Artistry and the Postcolonial Woman Artist in Nina Bouraoui's *La Voyeuse interdite*," Anna Kemp suggests that beyond the scope of Bouraoui's bicultural and feminist writing lays a true confirmation of the author's place in the mostly masculine realms of French and world literature. Bouraoui's *La Voyeuse interdite* relates the story of a young Algerian girl, Fikria, whose marriage is being arranged by her father, as she herself remains locked in her room, observing from within those walls what goes on outside her window, powerless if not for her ability to tell her story.[97] Kemp explains: "Bouraoui's protagonist covets the impersonal and disembodied subject position of supposedly "masculine" artistic traditions. It is this position that postcolonial women writers are most often denied, not only by patriarchal narratives, but also by the reflexes of postcolonial criticism" (237). In all her works, and particularly *La Voyeuse interdite*, Bouraoui masterly uses the fluid lines of ethnicity and sexuality in relation to the fixed institutions of culture, tradition and family, especially in the Algerian setting. In demonstrating the manner in which these traditional institutions cannot

effectively control subjects in their entirety – the creative freedom of the main character as well as the author's voice – through vivid, physical descriptions, Bouraoui's testimonial is transformed into a manifesto demonstrating the fluidity of artistic creation in postcolonial, urban narratives.

Unlike Nora Hamdi in *Des Poupées et des anges*, Nina Bouraoui does not so much seek to redefine gender roles as she does challenge the markers of gender, ethnicity, nationality and sexuality in the context of her French-Algerian life, via the main narrative and the narrator's voice and the tropes of artifice and dissimulation. In *Garçon manqué*, as the text begins in Algeria with a young Bouraoui running on the beach with her best friend Amine, the text quickly moves on to outline polar oppositions between Algeria and France, freedom and constraints, the sea and the land, and the conception of male and female gender identities.[98] Bouraoui delineates early on in her narrative the traits of masculinity in Algerian culture, traits that are also present in Hamdi's *Des Poupées* and in Bellil's *Enfer*:

> Ma vie est un secret. Moi seule sais mon désir, ici, en Algérie. Je veux être un homme. Et je sais pourquoi. C'est ma seule certitude. C'est ma vérité. Être homme en Algérie c'est devenir invisible. Je quitterai mon corps. Je quitterai mon visage. Je quitterai ma voix. Je serai dans la force. L'Algérie est un homme.[99] (39)

The gendering of Algeria here prefigures the gendering of France in all its femininity that Bouraoui describes later in the novel as she is forced to dress as a girl upon her family's impending move to Rennes ("Mon déguisement. Ma peau française" 'My costume, my French skin' 97, 56). This commentary on gender, built into the main semi-autobiographical narrative, enables Bouraoui to reach beyond the frame of the novel towards socio-cultural concepts and issues related to Otherness, immigration and integration in France.

In another polar opposition, the sexual body is assimilated to the sick body in Bouraoui's semi-autobiographical *La Vie heureuse* (2002), where each chapter alternates between the

sickness of the narrator's aunt, Carol, who is slowly dying of cancer in Brittany, and the physical unrest felt by the narrator Marie and caused by her first lesbian relationship in Zurich. The narrator's coming to terms with her sexuality and her lesbian identity is likened in *La Vie heureuse* to her aunt's death as both events signify the end of innocence and the start of her adult life. Thus, as one chapter finishes with "c'est mon corps, retourné, battu, qui ne supporte rien, ni l'eau ni la bière ni le chocolat, ni la viande, rien, il me faut de l'air, un souffle qui viendrait des lèvres de Diane, qu'elle me donne de son sang, qu'elle me nourrisse, qu'elle me rendre tout ce qu'elle m'a pris" ("It's my body, turned around, beaten, that cannot handle anything, neither water nor beer not chocolate, nor meat, nothing, I need air, a breath that would come from Diane's lips, for her to give me her blood, to feed me, to give me everything she has taken" 177), the next begins with "Carol reprend connaissance, dit ma sœur. Elle a parlé. Elle vient d'un autre pays. C'était le coma. C'est la vie de nouveau, les lèvres sèches, la peau chaude. Carol ne se plaint pas. Elle a très soif. On a retiré l'oxygène" ("Carol is regaining consciousness, my sister says. She spoke. She comes from another country. She was in a coma. It is life again, her dry lips, her warm skin. Carol does not complain. She is very thirsty. She is no longer on oxygen" 178).

Towards the very end of the novel, both narratives intertwine in a form of breathless acceleration: "Carol cesse ses séances de rayons. Elle ne supporte pas. Je ne sais pas si je vais supporter le printemps sur ma peau. Je ne sais pas si je vais supporter la voix de Diane au téléphone" ("Carol stops her chemotherapy. She can't take it. I don't know that I can take spring on my skin. I don't know that I can take Diane's voice on the phone" 253). The interweaving narratives of sickness in health and sickness in love are marked by a fast rhythm in Bouraoui's writing style, a pace reminiscent of the fastening musical rhythm in Abdellatif Kéchiche's films

at key moments, particularly in *Black Venus*, during the staged spectacle of Sarah Baartman. In the same manner, Bouraoui unveils and brings to life the female and lesbian body against the fixity of gender norms that apply to the narrator Marie.

In *Poupée Bella*, the narrator is attempting to forget her true love Marion by relentlessly going out to the lesbian and gay clubs of Paris, accompanied by her gay friend Julien. The narrative is written in the form of journal entries, each one briefly recounting the events of the previous night, or relating the narrator's thoughts on writing itself and its relationship to sexuality: "*13 Août*… Quand j'écris, je n'ai plus besoin du Milieu des Filles. Je prends possession de mon corps, de mon désir. Je ne veux pas être lue. Je ne veux pas être carressée" ("*August 13*… When I write, I don't need the Girls Scene anymore. I take possession of my body, of my desire. I don't want to be read. I don't want to be caressed" 30); "*20 Septembre*… Je suis en devenir homosexuel, comme je suis dans le livre en train de se faire" ("*September 20*… I am becoming homosexual, just as I am becoming the book that I am writing" 39); "*7 Novembre*… Je n'ai pas choisi d'aimer les filles, je n'ai pas choisi d'écrire" ("*November 7*… I didn't chose to like girls, I didn't choose to write"61); "*29 Décembre*…Les mots devraient porter l'homosexualité et non la réparer. Ce serait un vrai roman d'amour alors" ("*December 29*…Words should support homosexuality, not fix it. It would then be a true love story" 85). In likening the writing of a novel to the unfolding path towards accepting one's sexuality and forming ties towards a potential relationship, Bouraoui's narrative relies on the early feminist strategies of Hélène Cixous in *Le Rire de la méduse* and Monique Wittig in *Le Corps lesbien*.[100]

It is through writing itself that Bouraoui's narratives manage to break through the fixed walls that surround her work and persona: bicultural, immigrant, woman, lesbian. In *Mes Mauvaises pensées* (2005), she writes: "J'ai toujours voulu fuir la vie; l'écriture et l'amour en

sont les ultimes moyens" (12). Bouraoui's relationship to writing, the cathartic effect it provokes as it breaks through the barriers of the body – the author's own paratext – is reminiscent of Hélène Cixous' theory on female writing in *The Laugh of Medusa*: "Il faut que la femme s'écrive: que la femme écrive de la femme et fasse venir les femmes à l'écriture, dont elles ont été éloignées aussi violemment qu'elles l'ont été de leurs corps" (33).[101] The constraints of the institutionalized (white, male, established) literary sphere in Paris are one with the gender and sexual identity walls that Bouraoui overcomes with her writing. In the words of Cixous, Bouraoui writes the Other body (immigrant and lesbian) and through that writing of the body, her writing as an Other (female, Algerian, lesbian) author comes through, free of the fixed denomination of "Other". The body is for Cixous inseparable from the act of writing for women: Bouraoui uses that technique to break through the paradigms of fixity imposed on her by the institutions.

In her narratives, Bouraoui uses the female, sick and/or lesbian body as an object of subterfuge in order to convey deeper implications of authorship (for Bouraoui as a French-Algerian and lesbian author), and of immigration in relation to the fixity of ethnic and gender roles both in Algeria and in France. In *Garçon Manqué*, Nina dresses as a boy in Algeria as she does not feel entirely comfortable in her female body (and her sexuality), but also as she is wanting to be in a position of power, that of the men in Algeria. This narrative trope is reflected in the author's path as a Francophone, postcolonial writer within the main literary sphere: working with the different types of paratexts (in print and online) and presenting a Westernized image of herself in her publications have enabled Bouraoui to become an "accepted" writer within the French literature sphere, in spite of her in/visible differences.

Nora Hamdi

Nora Hamdi's particularity is also the use of physicality in the body of her text. In the same vein as Bouraoui, it is without artifice that sexuality and gender come into play in her narratives as they grow from the local to the global, beyond the walls of the *banlieue*. In *Des Poupées et des anges* (Paris: Au Diable Vauvert, 2004), the familial *mise-en-scène* is one that appears non-traditional when taking into consideration the official representation of immigrant life found at the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration (see chapter I): it is tinted with violence and challenging of stereotypical gender roles. The familial fractures expressed by Hamdi are essentially literary adaptations of the socio-cultural malaise that victimizes women in the *banlieue*, as expressed by NPNS' leader Fadela Amara: "we are not for sale, nor are we there for the taking; we will not be submissive or docile" (27). In *Des Poupées*, Hamdi's characters become the voices of women like Samira Bellil whose testimonies have become exclusively sequestered inside the native informant box and outside the literature realm, thus confirming the institutional separation between quintessentially French literature and Other literature.

Hamdi's *Des Poupées* unveils the social and cultural fractures that fragment the familial unit in contemporary Metropolitan projects, using the figure of a tomboy. The family in the novel lives under the authority of the father. Physically violent and emotionally abusive to his wife and daughters, he is a construction worker who leaves for three months at a time and eventually suffers a permanent injury on one of the sites, ending up paralyzed from the waist down and at the mercy of the women in his household, or so he says. The mother is *effacée*, far from the ideal mother depicted in Francophone paratexts (see section on Suzanne Césaire) she has given up on her failed marriage to devote herself to her children. In the absence of a visual paratext as in Calixthe Beyala's Albin Michel edition of *Le Petit prince de Belleville* (see above)

to guide the reader towards a familial, integrated nuclear family, Nora Hamdi's text is raw, embodying the reality of domestic violence in a lengthy yet fast-paced narrative form:

> C'est une médaille pour mutilé de guerre qu'il faudrait lui remettre, à ma mère. Dans l'épreuve de la douleur, jamais de ma vie je n'ai vu une femme en passer par autant de positions. A la verticale, à l'horizontale, par terre, sur le ventre, sur le dos, hématome en pleine face, trempée de peur, se cacher dans les chiottes, devant l'évier, ensanglantée, crâne ouvert, bouche pendante, menaçante, le dessous de plat en fer dans les mains, vouloir se défendre, rapidement allongée, agrippée aux pieds de table, se faire traîner, un gros trou dans les cheveux, une énorme poignée de mèches dans les mains de mon père, la rage monter, genoux en sang, supplier, prier.[102] (85)

The fastening, breathless punctuation in this recounting of an episode of physical violence is reminiscent of the accelerating musical rhythm used in Abdellatif Kéchiche's *Vénus Noire*. More significantly, it is the dissection of the female body within the narrative ("crâne," "bouche," "cheveux," "mains," "genoux") that embodies the impermanence of the Other's image in a sort of reappropriation of the disembodiment Other women have been subjected to in institutionalized narratives and displays.

Hamdi moves towards a larger notion of humanity with the character of the mother, connecting the local narrative of the family unit to a more global notion of femininity and feminism. The silence surrounding the father's physical abuse becomes attached to the sociocultural issues of social dysfunction in the French *banlieues*:

> C'était donc ça, sa vie. Ainsi, on peut vivre de cette façon sans que ça dérange personne, sans qu'aucun de ses contemporains ne s'aperçoive que son existence a si peu de valeur, tellement inexorable, tellement rien du tout. Elle pourrait crever dans cette incompréhension, crever dans le silence, crever dans l'indifférence générale, crever dans l'idée qu'elle et ses semblables se courberont toujours et encore. Dure constatation.[103] (86-7)

Nora Hamdi's writing techniques – physicality, the dissection of the female body and the globalization of women's suffering – connect her works to those of Paulette Nardal and Suzanne Césaire, in attempting to break through the walls of institutionalized gender stereotypes. The

household described in *Des Poupées* is not one whose artifacts would be displayed in the CNHI's *Repères* exhibit or one that could easily be described and promoted by an established French writer of the paratext. Hamdi's writing, in the same manner as Bouraoui's, is raw and at times shocking, but in line with a contemporary movement of unveiling social reality as opposed to reinforcing official representations of the Other.

This physicality of the text is exacerbated in the contrasted lifestyles of the two older daughters, who are also the narrators: Chirine the sexualized aspiring model, and Lya the sixteen-year-old tomboy. Both narrative voices intersect in times of conflict, at the same time bringing physicality to the text as well as a sense of fluidity of consciousness. The reader is subtly taken from one point of view to the other, often within the same chapter.[104] All along the *Poupées* narrative, Chirine's efforts to gain more fame as a model are driven by the strong will to integrate into the white French middle-class, and to leave her father's violent regime and the presence of her sister Lya who, in her opinion, complies to her condition of Other. The malaise that separates Chirine, the feminine, sexualized model, from her more masculine sister seeps out of the household walls to touch on a greater debate, one that brings us back to the *voyeur/vue* dialectic and the *mise-en-scène* of Sarah Baartman in Chapter I:

> Était-ce la faute de sa sœur si elle représentait tout ce qu'elle fuyait? Était-ce sa faute si cette fille du même sang qu'elle lui rappelait tout ce qu'elle n'avait cessé de gommer en elle? Ces traits qu'elle a tenté d'effacer à l'aide de la chirurgie, des nombreuses crèmes, des régimes, de nouvelles façons de parler, marcher, penser. Cachée sous des vêtements plus coûteux les uns que les autres. Non… C'était pas la faute de Lya, mais Chirine préférait devenir une étrangère.[105] (201)

Chirine's wish to become a model in the French society of spectacle (in hope to be integrated within the French middle-class) and the rejection of her household and origins is in Hamdi's narrative a manifestation of Frantz Fanon's *Peau noire, masques blancs* theory on the desire of the postcolonial Black woman to whiten or "lactify" her lineage, in line with a certain fascination

with the white man and his lifestyle. Chirine's storyline also falls in line with Jean Baudrillard's notion of simulation ("to feign to have what one hasn't"), which differs from the dissimulation process evidenced in Nina Bouraoui's narratives.

As a woman of color, Chirine is shown as exclusively dating French white men, as Fanon underlines: "Il s'agit de ne pas sombrer de nouveau dans la négraille, et toute Antillaise s'efforcera, dans ses flirts ou dans ses liaisons, de choisir le moins noir" (38/ "It is always essential to avoid falling back into the pit of niggerhood, and every woman in the Antilles, whether in casual flirtation or in a serious affair, is determined to select the least black of the men" 47). Discussing Mayotte Capécia's successful novel *Je suis martiniquaise* (1948), Fanon in "La femme de couleur et le blanc" criticizes the female narrator's obsession with marrying a white man. Fanon underlines:

> Nous sommes avertis, c'est vers la lactification que tend Mayotte. Car enfin il faut blanchir la race: cela, toutes les Martiniquaises le savent, le disent, le répètent. Blanchir la race, sauver la race, mais non dans le sens qu'on pourrait supposer: non pas préserver "l'originalité de la portion du monde au sein duquel elles ont grandi", mais assurer sa blancheur.[106] (38)

In *Des Poupées*, Nora Hamdi uses the contrasted poles of immigrant and French, *banlieue* and city center, black and white in the character of Chirine only to confirm Fanon's thoughts of a bipolar, fixed ethnic world.[107] In truth, this polar opposition between Chirine's background and the realm of whiteness she is yearning for, paralleled with her drastic differences with her tomboy sister Lya are reminiscent of Bouraoui's dichotomy in her narratives between Algeria and France. In positing an alternative, artificial way of moving along the main/fixed narratives, Bouraoui has shown alterity and fluidity as possible identities for the postcolonial urban Other, especially in *Garçon Manqué*. This alterity is vibrant in Hamdi's *Des Poupées* in the character of Lya the tomboy, concealing her femininity under masculine clothes, working with artifice and

subterfuge in order to attain the liberties that are given to men in immigrant families. The reader is therefore confronted in Bouraoui and Hamdi's narratives with a double process of dissimulation (of feminine attributes in the case of Nina and Lya) and simulation (of whiteness, a French identity or a masculine identity), both processes of subterfuge and artifice that are present in the text as well as in the paratext.

c) Institutionalization and Paratexts

The subterfuge of cross-dressing in Bouraoui's *Garçon Manqué* and Hamdi's *Des Poupées* in contrast with the fixed polarity of the French identity and immigrant households is to be considered in relation to the paratext in the terms of Jean Baudrillard's 1981 *Simulacra and Simulation*. For Baudrillard, the real has ceased to exist as symbols and signs of the real have come to prevail, bringing modern society into the realm of the "hyperreal."[108] In Chapter I, the hyperreal following Umberto Eco's *Travels in Hyperreality* was achieved at the CNHI through the crammed and cramped displays of a supposedly multicultural, yet unique French national identity (see Figure 1.7.). In the case of Bouraoui and Hamdi's narratives, the spectator/ reader is again confronted with the hyperreal in regards to gender and ethnic stereotypes: the notions of masculinity, femininity and ethnicity have become pure simulation that is to be achieved in order to gain access to French society and the French literature realm. Through the devices of artifice and disembodiment, the authors have created a discourse of integration in sine with one of simulation. In using the realm of the hyperreal as directed by the signs and symbols of the real, Hamdi and Bouraoui's heroines manage to slip in and out of the once tightly sealed, fixed heteronormative French identity. These narrative devices as reflections of the semi-institutionalization of Others are reflected in, and a reflection of, the various forms of paratext adopted by the authors' publishing houses.

Baudrillard explains the evolution of the image as simulation as follows: “elle est le reflet d’une réalité profonde; elle masque et dénature une réalité profonde; elle masque *l’absence* de réalité profonde; elle est sans rapport à quelque réalité que ce soit: elle est son propre simulacre pur” (“1. It is the reflection of a basic reality. 2. It masks and perverts a basic reality. 3. It masks the *absence* of a basic reality. 4. It bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum” 17, Glaser 6). The author’s image on the book cover follows these steps as it instills the reader with a paratext guiding him into the reading of the main text. First the picture of the author represents the author herself, but this image is quickly turned into an alternate narrative of gender and ethnic stereotypes about the Other, leaving in its wake no trace of the author’s intellectual contribution (this has been shown in Daniel Maximin’s reediting of Suzanne Césaire’s works in *Le Grand Camouflage*). Unlike Maximin in his republishing of Suzanne Césaire’s works, or Beyala and her exuberant post-trial representation at Albin Michel Editions, Hamdi’s publishers at Editions Léo Scheer include a photograph of the author as a “band” to the book, as they do for all their authors. Hamdi’s earlier works published at Au Diable Vauvert Editions did not include a band but a photo of the author inside the front cover, therefore invisible on the outside.

Figure 2.6: Band for Nora Hamdi’s *La Couleur dans les mains* – Léo Scheer editions (2011)

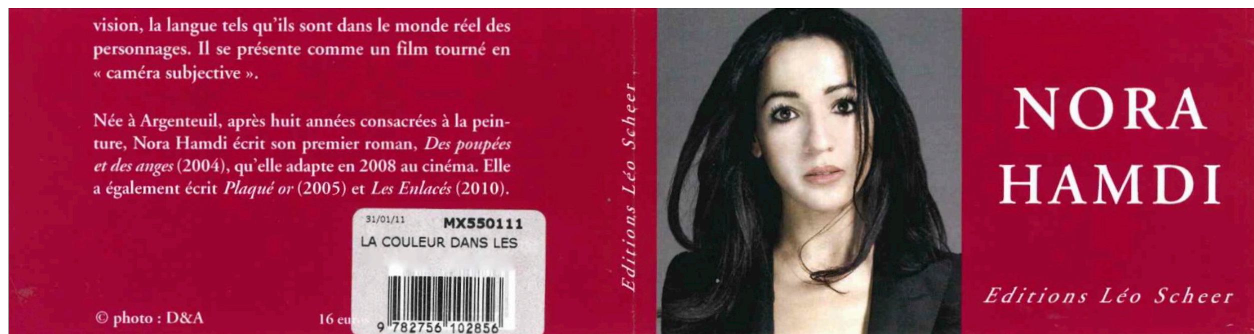
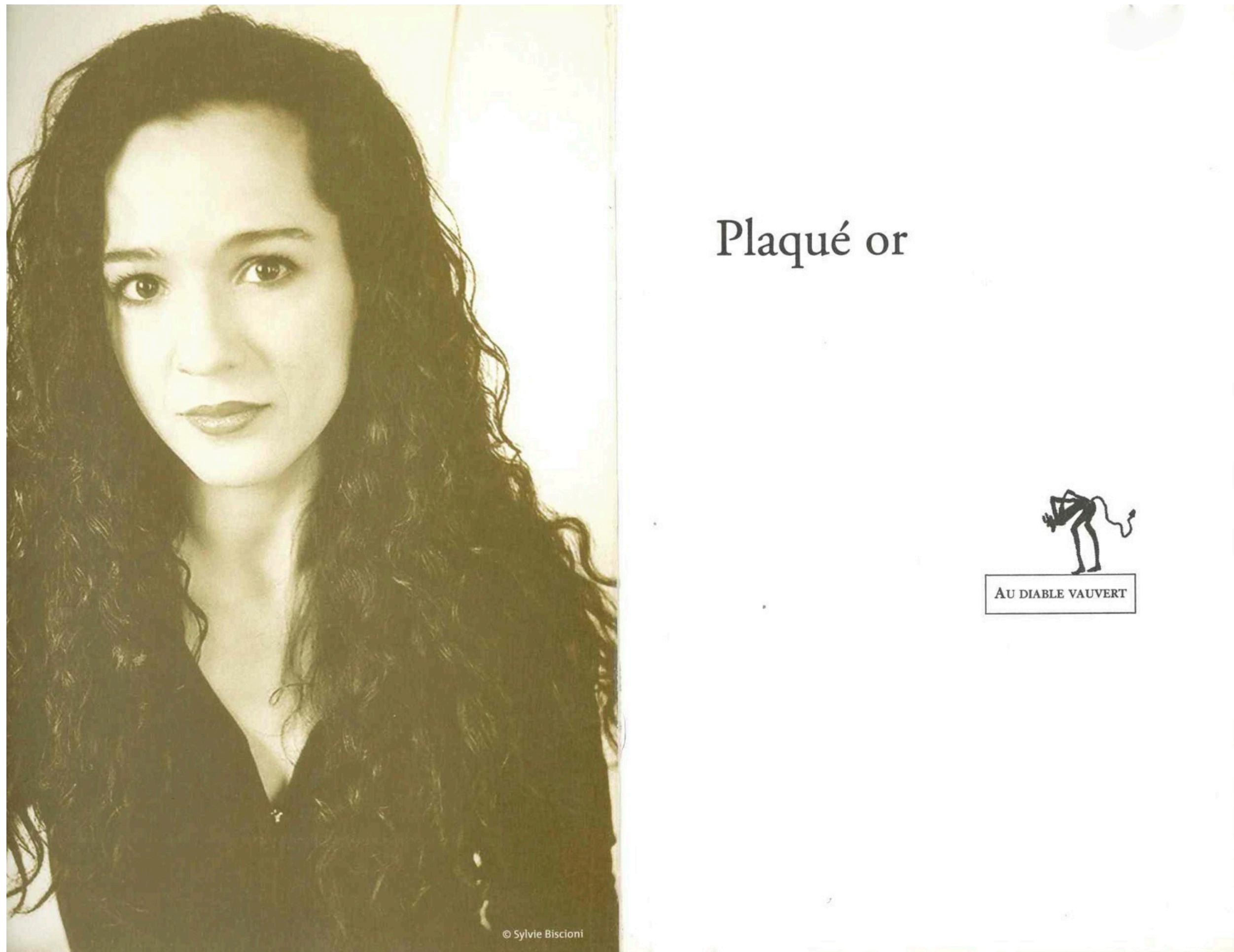


Figure 2.7: Inside cover, *Plaqué Or* – Au Diable Vauvert Editions (2003)



These photographs, presenting their author in her feminine attributes (long hair, make-up, upper chest showing under her open blouse), introduce the stereotypes of femininity and female Otherness/ integration expected by the reader opening a novel by an author *issue de l'immigration*. On the 2011 band's photo, Hamdi's hair is straightened, and her complexion is ghostly, almost blanched/ whitened in contrast to her naturally curly hair and olive complexion as seen in the 2003 photograph. Hamdi is the subject of the reverse mechanism Calixthe Beyala suffered from in 1992: as Hamdi's narratives have strayed away from the reality and violence of *banlieue* life in *Des Poupées* and *Plaqué Or*, and towards the Parisian life of an ethnically neutral painter (*La Couleur dans les mains*), the paratext surrounding her works has continuously

evolved towards a more Westernized, institutionalized representation of the author. Following Baudrillard's argument, Hamdi herself – the feminist writer, the daughter of first-generation immigrants – ceases to exist as the Westernized photo of the author on the band is all that remains visible to the reader.

The visual paratext's function in Hamdi's case is dual: its temporary form further reinforces the immateriality of the author, and it conversely liberates the text from the stereotypes attributed to the author's image. Unlike Calixthe Beyala's headshots, directly affixed onto the back covers of her novels – therefore inescapable – Hamdi's portraits are either directly attached to the text in the inside cover (*Plaqué Or*), or detachable so barely there for the reader to be influenced in their reading of the text (*La Couleur dans les mains*). Gérard Genette writes about the function of the band in *Paratexts: Thresholds of interpretation* (1997)

> Le trait matériel commun de [la *jaquette* (ou *liseuse*) et la *bande*] …est leur caractère amovible, et comme constitutivement éphémère, qui invite presque le lecteur à s'en débarrasser une fois remplie leur mission d'affiche, et éventuellement de protection … la jaquette et la bande portent de préférence des messages paratextuels que l'on souhaite eux-mêmes transitoires, à oublier après effet. (30)[109]

Nina Bouraoui's publisher, Stock (Paris), uses exclusively dark blue covers for their publications, affixing to the cover a band with a picture of the author. The effect is the same for Bouraoui as it is for Hamdi: her status as "Other" from the main literary sphere disintegrates as the band and her fixed image as woman and second generation immigrant is detached from the text itself, and as the narrative opens onto the expression of her "invisible" otherness: her sexuality.

Figure 2.8. Front covers and bands to *La Vie heureuse* (2002) and *Avant les hommes* (2007) – Stock Editions

Nina Bouraoui's *La Vie heureuse* was published in 2002, Nora Hamdi's *Des Poupées et des anges* in 2003, the same year as Calixthe Beyala's *Femme nue femme noire*. The gap between the three publications is immense. Hamdi and Bouraoui's publications are void of any kind of oversexualized paratext whereas Beyala's post-trial works have been tainted with overbearing sexuality, scandal and an anti-conformity flair on the part of the author. In Beyala's case, this lack of neutrality has not acted in her favor as her sales and popularity have been affected by the trial and her overwhelming presence in the media (*Il m'offrait le ciel* was a direct attack against one of her former lovers, French television pioneer Michel Drucker – the affair, its fallout as well as the publication of her novel were discussed at length in the popular media).

For Nora Hamdi and Nina Bouraoui, being presented as integrated, conforming, semi-institutionalized authors *issues de l'immigration* has enabled their works to gain recognition in the French literary realm. Nora Hamdi's first novel, *Des Poupées et des anges* (2004), was turned into a film in 2008 (Hamdi herself was the director). While Hamdi's film did not meet as much success as the novel on which it was based, it revealed today's most sought after actress *issue de l'immigration*, Leïla Bekhti, in the main role. The film received the Enfants Terribles (Cocteau) prize, and the novel received the prix Yves Navarre. Nina Bouraoui received the Prix du Livre Inter for *La Voyeuse interdite* in 1991 and the Prix Renaudot for *Mes Mauvaises pensées* in 2005.

This chapter has revealed a duality between the exclusion of postcolonial women writers from the main French literature sphere (and additionally, in the case of the Nardal sisters and Suzanne Césaire, from the Negritude and Créolité movements), and their conditional inclusion as authors who have conformed to the official, fixed representation of the integrated Other woman in France. This duality materializes in the gendered – or conversely neutral – paratexts that surround these authors' works. In the case of Calixthe Beyala, a paratext of non-compliance and exacerbated exoticism was used as a means for the French literary institutions to outline an-Other, dissident literature and therefore confirm its superiority. Today, neutral and Westernized forms of paratext – in conjunction with the use of social media – have enabled authors Nora Hamdi and Nina Bouraoui to challenge racial and gender norms while moving in and out of the strict boundaries that delineate French literature. This shift in Other literary productions is part of a larger artistic movement of resistance. This movement privileges the fluidity of the art medium over the fixed boundaries established by the institutions in the fields of literature and cinema, in order to promote expressions of Metropolitan urban identities and *identité-relation*.

Chapter III
Movement in Ethni-City: Cinema of the Other and Identité-Relation

In *The Emancipated Spectator*, Jacques Rancière discusses the role of the spectator in the production of the spectacle. Rancière first reiterates Guy Debord's predicate that there is an essential separation between the spectacle and the spectator, that "[t]he spectacle is the reign of vision, and vision is exteriority – that is, self-dispossession … What human beings contemplate in the spectacle is the activity they have been robbed of; it is their own essence become alien, turned against them, organizing a collective world whose reality is that dispossession" (6-7). In Debord's *Society of Spectacle*, it is assumed that the spectator is passive, an empty receptacle for the ruling ideology's images, dispossessed of their essence that is projected before their eyes.[110]

I have underlined in Chapter I how the spectator has been considered in colonial exhibits as a receptacle in which ideologies can be poured in the form of images that are physically as well as diachronically fixed. I have also suggested that the spectator is left to create his own discourse of immigration and integration in the *Repères* and *Invention du Sauvage* exhibits as he is abandoned, wandering from room to room without any form of narrative that would effectively link colonial artifacts to France's contemporary immigration culture. Additionally, I mentioned that the power of creating their own discourse disconcerted the spectators of the Surrealists' 1931 *Vérité sur les colonies* exhibit, ultimately provoking its unpopularity when faced with the grandiose Exposition Coloniale of the Bois de Vincennes.

For Rancière, Debord's idea of the imbalance between the active production of spectacle and the supposedly passive viewer does not take the spectator's experience into account. The very notion of spectacle automatically renders the spectator active as watching entails receiving information, and bringing into focus all the discourses previously experienced as an individual viewer: "The spectator also acts, like the pupil or scholar. She observes, selects, compares,

interprets. She links what she sees to a host of other things that she has seen on other stages, in other kinds of place. She composes her own poem with the elements of the poem before her" (Rancière 13).

Regarding the aforementioned exhibits and paratexts (Chapters I & II) of the Other, the text that the spectator/ reader creates *en filigrane* of the oeuvre's discourse as he receives this information does not consistently follow the rules of the ruling ideology precisely because it is specific to each individual. Therefore, in the reception of an art display, a literary oeuvre, or a film, the interconnected interpretations (of the various spectators) that form the receiving side of the spectacle demonstrate emancipation as Rancière understands it: "the blurring of the boundary between those who act and those who look; between individuals and members of a collective body" (19). For Rancière, emancipation from the system of spectacle means for the viewer to form a long lost unity with the spectacle itself through interconnected individual discourses: "[the idiom produced by artists in the staging of their works] requires spectators who play the role of active interpreters, who develop their own translation in order to appropriate the 'story' and make it their own story. An emancipated community is a community of narrators and translators" (22). In my dissertation, I understand this emancipation from the spectacle– this detachment from the main discourse and creation of individual intersecting interpretations – as demonstrative of and enhancing Edouard Glissant's concept of *identité-relation* as it is attached to France's neo-urban ethnicity. When using his own tools and his own experience, the contemporary spectator is able to piece together the fragmented image of the Other that is produced before him, a creative factor prominently taken into account in the field of cinematography.[111]

Until now, I have considered the antimodernist image of the Other as it is convened through the official media of the museum and the publishing realm, and I have delved into the literary tactics demonstrated in the works of specific authors as attempts to shatter this fixed image. The active role of the spectator/reader in their multiplicity of voices and experiences translates in my thematic into a discursive product, a manifestation of a postethnic *identité-relation* in France that is rendered most explicit in the realm of cinema.[112] In *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*, Fatima El-Tayeb reappropriates the term "queer" to discuss Otherness in ethnicity and identity in Europe:

> I use "queer" here as a verb rather than an adjective, describing a practice of identity (de)construction that results in a new type of diasporic consciousness neither grounded in ethnic identifications nor referencing a however mythical homeland, instead using the tension of living supposedly exclusive identities and transforming it into a creative potential, building a community based on the shared experience of multiple, contradictory positionalities. The new European minority activism demonstrates a queer practice by insisting that identity is unstable, strategic, shifting, and always performative. (xxxvi)

El-Tayeb considers the "queer" (non-European) performance of identity to be an act of resistance against the institutionalized ethno-normative ideology that rejects "Europeans of color," that is, all migrants from first to third generation. This "queer" identity is performed in contrast with the "other" identity that is produced by cultural and national authorities for these (im)migrants. For El-Tayeb, the "queer," postethnic identities are thus formed of fragmented notions of race, gender, space and ethnicity and create a network that is in constant rhizomatic expansion, against the one-dimensional "other" image.[113] This chapter demonstrates that El-Tayeb's theory is applicable in relation to Rancière's theory of emancipation, insofar as the spectators' interpretation when faced with the Cinema of the Other produces and affirms the existence of a postethnic identity in France, constructed on the format of the rhizome, therefore in stark opposition with the official representation of the Other.

Two genres appear as manifestations of this interlacing *identité-relation* in contemporary film production: what used to be considered as *beur* and *banlieue* film, whose action is no longer exclusively set around one particular ethnic or socio-geographical group – I address this category as *Cinema of the Other* or *Postethnic Cinema*– and a developing genre known as "film choral" or "film mosaïque," a film presenting singular narratives that nevertheless intersect in many points (this differs from a "film à vignettes" such as *Paris je t'aime* (2008) in which all narratives are independent and never intersect). In the first category, I observe the leaps in social and cultural space in relation to Otherness as they are noticeable in Claire Denis' oeuvre, using her vibrant tale of a Creole serial killer in Paris in *J'ai pas sommeil* (1994) and the familial and communal *banlieue* drama of *35 Rhums* (2008), and manifestations of post-*banlieue* ethnicity in Géraldine Nakache's *Tout ce qui brille* (2010). In the "film choral" category, I will consider Austrian filmmaker Michael Haneke's *Code Inconnu* (2000) and young Haitian director Djinn Carrenard's cinematography, particularly *Donoma* (2011).

1) *Banlieue* Cinema and Static Space

Banlieue filmmaking appeared in the 1990s as a parallel discourse on life in the projects for those children of immigrants who had literally been placed outside of city limits by French immigration authorities post-war and post-decolonization. Kristin Ross contrasts post-war modernization with the exclusion of the Other from the city center in *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies* and explains: "Once modernization has run its course, then one is, quite simply, either French or not, modern or not: exclusion becomes racial or national in nature … In today's Paris, that frozen temporal lag appears as a spatial configuration: the white, upper-class city *intra muros*, surrounded by islands of immigrant communities a long RER ride away" (Ross 12).

When talking about filmmaking relative to the Other in France, one is usually redirected to the terms of *banlieue* and *beur* filmmaking, as outlined in the many studies carried out by film specialist Carrie Tarr. In *Reframing Difference: Beur and Banlieue Filmmaking in France* (2005), Tarr explains that these categories are unavoidable and risk being reified, but she chooses to "emphasize filmmaking as a set of (changing) practices" whose common point is "a concern with the place and identity of the marginal and excluded in France" (3). It is essential to remember that the postcolonial Other in contemporary literature and film is not always a second or third generation immigrant with roots in one of the former French colonies. Today, France's Other is not necessarily a "non-white," he is and *she* is the person that does not fit in what Carrie Tarr terms "the universalist discourses of French Republicanism" (1).

Banlieue filmmaking played a pivotal role on the French film industry's road to a wider understanding of a new French urban ethnicity. Matthieu Kassovitz' *La Haine* (1995), which recounted the lives of a few *banlieue* youths and their malaise within conventional French society, won its director the Palme d'Or at the 1995 Cannes festival. This success set Kassovitz's film apart from Malik Chibane's *Hexagone* (1994), a work not as popular with the general public that was the first to set the Other in opposition with the "official" center. *Banlieue* cinema's first steps in Chibane's *Hexagone* and his next film *Douce France* (1995) emphasized the seemingly insurmountable gap separating the main protagonists (commonly a handful of *banlieue* youths) from life at the city center. Chibane's first film portrayed a fixed image of the lifeless *banlieue*, which was meant to counter the fixed image spread by the official media at a time of political malaise in France. In Chibane's film, the fixity of both spheres (*banlieue* and city center) is not counterbalanced with movement from one sphere to the other. Kassovitz's film went a step further in alternating frozen/ fixed frames and tracking shots, emphasizing a moving exit to the

stillness of *banlieue* life. *La Haine*'s characters are shown infiltrating the discursive Parisian urban space and creating their own discourse, superimposed onto the main one, via the use of their cars and the metro. In both Chibane and Kassovitz' works, the *banlieue* is depicted as a social dead-end from which there can only be temporary escapes. In more recent productions, these two cinematic techniques have been developed and accentuated so as to pull the discursive aspect of *banlieue* youth integration within the main space from underneath the actual material.

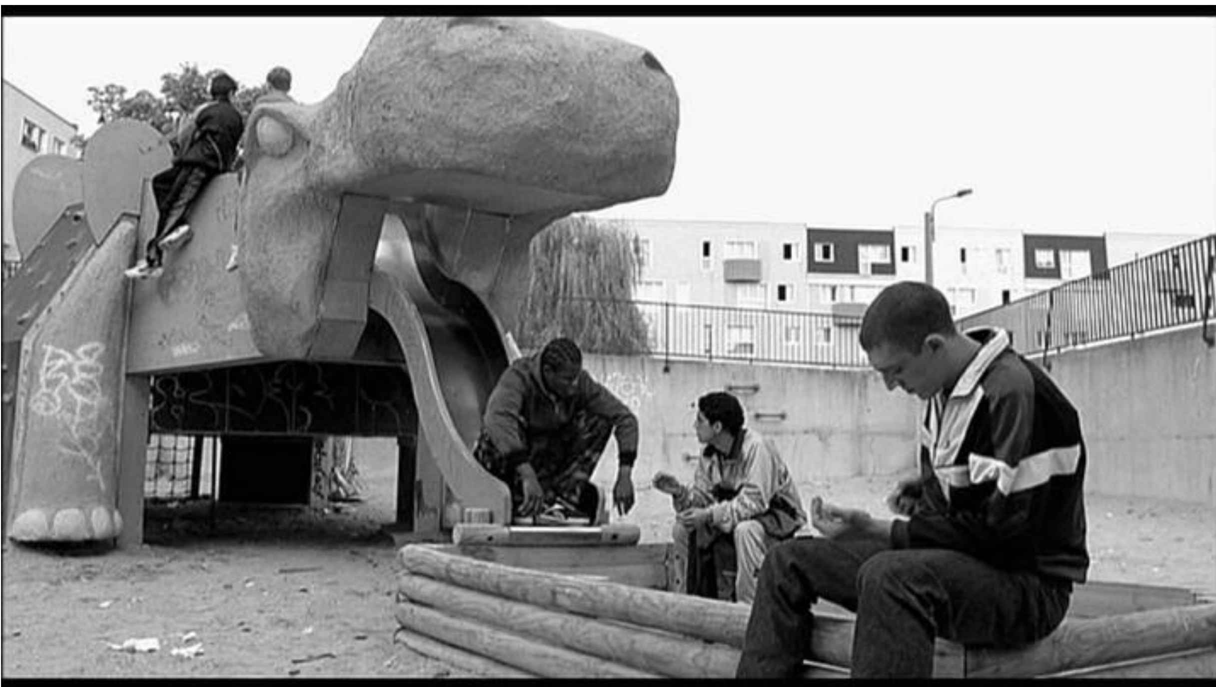
Chibane and Kassovitz' 1990s productions are pioneers in intrinsically coupling *banlieue* filmmaking with social discourse about the Other. Chibane's making of *Hexagone* came at a time when the fixed image of the postcolonial Other in France was becoming an intrinsic part of political discourses: Socialist Francois Mitterrand was about to cede the presidency to Gaullist Jacques Chirac, whose mandate saw a series of restrictive bills aimed at *integrating* the other, as explained by Carrie Tarr:

> The return of the Right to power in 1993, with its policy of curbing immigrant rights to French nationality and citizenship, its introduction of racist identity controls as a measure against fundamentalist terrorism and its provocative directive allowing head teachers to ban the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in French state schools, meant that Arabs, immigrants and Muslims […] were constantly being constructed by the media as 'other' to French national identity. (51)

This image of difference conveyed through the media at the beginning of the 1990s is what Chibane's filmmaking sought to deconstruct.[114] The main protagonists in *Hexagone* are shown constantly striving for a better life, outside of the *banlieue*. The discourse on screen is supplemented by the main protagonist's thoughts on life in the projects, which adds to the bitterness and sense of enclosing shown on screen. "Tu évolues dans des couloirs invisibles," says computer geek Ali, who falsifies his friends' resumes to help them on the job market."Ce bled… encore un centre commercial, toujours pas de centre-ville," notes Slim, the bitter main

protagonist (also the voice-over throughout the film).[115] Against the fixed image of the *banlieue* youth at the time, Chibane stages male leads striving for change, and secondary female protagonists acting on change. Slim's girlfriend does not wear the veil, manages to have her father agree to her working outside the home, and will not hold onto her virginity to be married to a man handpicked by her parents. In introducing the notion of double Otherness via the character of the female protagonist, Chibane was in this sense a precursor of the movements achieved in today's postethnic French cinema.

Figure 3.1: *La Haine* (1995)



Unlike Chibane's somewhat hopeful male leads seeking a form of social rehabilitation, Matthieu Kassovitz's enactment of the *banlieue* and its protagonists are staged evidences of the reality of drug dealing, boredom, and violence in the projects. In the same way the Other was propped up, *mis-en-scène* in the various exhibits of the Other studied in Chapter I, he is in Kassovitz's film the principal object of spectacle, more so than the *banlieue* itself. In *La Haine*, the spectator's gaze is directed towards the spectacle most often in an intimate way (through the

use of hand cameras and tracking shots) much like Kechiche's filming of *Vénus Noire*, so as to create an effect of acute agency on the part of the spectator, prefiguring Rancière's theory of the emancipated spectator. The black and white frozen frames of lifeless multi-apartment buildings in the projects are contrasted with quick hand camera work that follows the protagonists' temporary escape to the center of town. This escape is narrated along the lines of a social rebellion in the projects as the protagonists' bitterness is pushed to an extreme after one of theirs is beaten unconscious and a riot ensues during which a policeman loses his gun. Movement in the film is linked to violence as the gun is found by one of the youths, Vinz (actor Vincent Cassel), and serves as a token that becomes part of his character as he moves from one sphere to another. While the geographical and temporal fixity of the *banlieue* is countered through movement in order to depict another reality for postcolonial urban ethnicity, the film ends in brutal violence with its male lead, Vinz, being shot down by the police. The most contemporary films that will be at the core of this study stand out from *La Haine* as the violence factor has been increasingly taken out of the main narrative in order to depict an ever-forward movement, out of the *banlieue* onto the main Parisian space, focusing on individual realization in a network of *identité-relation* as opposed to group realization as it did in 1990s *banlieue* cinema.

Tarr's study discusses France's Cinema of the Other as an expression of the malaise that surrounds the integration of second-generation immigrants within French culture. The leap from the social to the artistic is not taken lightly and Tarr explains the intrinsic bond that unites both spheres as "foregrounding the voices and subjectivities of ethnic others and thereby reframing the way in which difference is conceptualized" (2). *Beur* and *banlieue* filmmaking are categories that are meant to disintegrate within a larger category (what I term "Cinema of the Other") as the *beur* and *banlieue* identities are also dissolving within a wider "Other," neo-urban identity.

Following Rancière's notion of emancipation, the spectator's agency is an integrant part in the completion of recent productions, a valid and essential tool in the filmmaking process. In the 1990s and with the onset of *banlieue* filmmaking, the classification of directors became problematic as the terms "beur" or "Maghrebi" proved to be non-encompassing of the variety of identities at play within that industry. Carr underlines:

> The latter ["d'origine maghrébine"] is an apparently neutral expression that recognizes the possibility of a bicultural identity. Yet it is also problematic, first because the term Maghrebi obscures the historical, geographical and cultural specificity of the origins of those it designates, and secondly because the emphasis on origins risks endorsing an essentialist notion of identity as pre-given, rather than acknowledging that identities, including those of the majority white French population, are constantly in process. (4)

The ethnic and national origin of the filmmaker is not taken into account in this study. In this work, I discuss the oeuvres of Claire Denis and Abdellatif Kechiche without underlining any difference in their ethnic identity, or gender identity. They are both "Others" in relation to mainstream French cinema; they are not outside of commercial cinema, but rather on the brink, as is the case for Géraldine Nakache and actress Leïla Bekhti in *Tout ce qui brille*. *Beur* and *banlieue* cinema are categories that do not accurately apply to today's postethnic reality, a realm of interlacing and inter-mapping identité-relations, "constantly in process." This construction (or rather revelation) of *identité-relation* in cinema is dependent upon the melding of the different spaces, the blurring of boundaries between spectacle and spectator, inside and outside, Self and Other.

The boundaries between the Parisian city center and its Others were clearly delineated within *banlieue* cinema, whether it was Chibane's or Kassovitz'. Michel Foucault's notion of the panopticon is more than applicable in both filmmakers' works, as the city center is shown as shining over and controlling of the outskirts (of town and society) while on the other side of the

clearly delineated city limits, Others are subjected to the center's cultural and societal power. However, Rancière's aesthetic theory in *The Emancipated Spectator* demonstrates that Foucault's panopticon model has started to fail or rather dissolve in the twenty-first century, coinciding with the availability of advanced technological means and faster modes of transportation to and from the center, establishing a form of consumer-based balance amongst insiders and outsiders, and blurring the cultural materiality of the city limits. Rancière writes:

> What is common is 'sensation'. Human beings are tied together by a certain sensory fabric, a certain distribution of the sensible, which defines their way of being together; and politics about the transformation of the sensory fabric of 'being together'. It seems as if the paradox of the 'apart together' has been dispelled. The solitude of the artwork is a false solitude: it is an intertwining or twisting together of sensations, like the cry of a human body. And a human collective is an intertwining and twisting together of sensations in the same way. (56)

The modern twentieth-century model delineated by Kristin Ross in *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies* (together but apart) is no longer applicable precisely because of the rapid crossing of neo-urban identities rendered possible by contemporary means of togetherness (internet access, modes of transportation) that promote the resurfacing of Otherness, the reality of *identité-relation*.

2) Claire Denis' Crossing Narratives

Claire Denis has over the years established herself as one of the most prominent figures in the French and Francophone film industry. Both *J'ai pas sommeil* (1994) and *35 Rhums* (2008) are set in sociocultural ghettos: *J'ai pas sommeil* is concerned with the gay Parisian nightlife and illegal/ murderous activities, and *35 Rhums* is set in the *banlieue* with a large HLM (housing project) as its focal point. Yet the fragmentation of these narratives (several individual storylines that intersect at strategic points in the movie) is closer in form to today's "film choral" or "film mosaïque" than it is to the *banlieue* or *beur* cinema categories. Both films are therefore

studied here as representative of a pivotal discursive space between the static category of *banlieue* cinema and today's developing notion of postethnic cinema.[116]

Janet Bergstrom, in her piece "Opacity in the Films of Claire Denis," underlines the lack of dialogues in Denis' compositions and the function of this lack as enabling a more prominent use of dance and music (a trait also found in the films of Abdellatif Kechiche and Michael Haneke) – this very trope of rhythm enabling the fragmented narratives to crisscross and generate a cohesive global narrative.[117] The work Denis accomplishes (from fragmentation to cohesiveness) is representative of the spectatorial dialectic brought forth by Rancière in *The Emancipated Spectator*: the purposely fragmented image of the Other is rendered whole because of its multiplicity, thus enabling the spectators' individual experiences to come together in a form of common viewership of Relation.

a) *J'ai pas sommeil* (1994)

Claire Denis' recounting of a *fait-divers*, the story of an immigrant Martiniquais serial killer, places the city of Paris at the center as the point of attraction and intersection for the different narratives that constitute *J'ai pas sommeil*. In her 1994 film, Denis focuses on the story of Camille (Richard Courcet), discursively linking his path to two other characters: on one hand, his older brother Théo (Denis' recurrent actor Alex Descas) whose marital troubles are affecting his imminent departure to Martinique, and on the other, a Lithuanian woman named Daïga who will eventually recognize Camille as the serial killer and flee Paris with his money once he has been arrested and imprisoned. Camille and Théo's relationship is in contradiction with Camille's nightlife and gender queer realm (in the opening scene, he is shown taking off his pantyhose at Théo's apartment where he is said to occasionally sleep and shower): their relationship belongs in the realm of home, dominated by the figure of their Martiniquan mother who has no suspicion

of her younger son's lifestyle or murderous activities. Daïga remains on the outside of the interspersing familial narratives until she is hired to work at the hotel where Camille and his lover have taken residence. From there, the Eastern European woman starts following Camille, making no real contact with him but for the touch of a hand at a coffee shop. In this section, I observe the city of Paris as an urban text (following the lines of Michel de Certeau's *Invention du quotidien*) where the individual narratives – as well as the ethnic and gender narratives – cross in the premise of Denis' focus on *identité-relation* as exemplified fourteen years later in *35 Rhums*.

Paris in 1994 as represented in Claire Denis' *J'ai pas sommeil* is just falling out of the rules of dominance outlined in Michel Foucault's panopticon model (*Discipline and Punish*) and moving onto Michel de Certeau's *applanissement* of the multiplicity of discourses that form the city as text. In *Discipline and Punish* (1975), Michel Foucault explores the concept of the prison as applicable to the city of Paris looking out and exercising control as the eye of power onto the *banlieue*, at the time recently built in order to accommodate the influx of migrant workers supposedly invited from the former colonies to rebuild Paris after its WWII destruction. Foucault writes: "Cet espace clos, découpé, surveillé en tous ses points, où les individus sont insérés en une place fixe, où les moindres mouvements sont contrôlés … tout cela constitue un modèle compact du dispositif disciplinaire" (199).[118] This one-way model (the inside of the city projecting cultural and judicial discipline onto the outside) is one that is still today active as we have seen in Chapter I via the French museums of the Other: their displays are laden with colonial and imperialistic narratives, confirming the disciplinary notion of cultural power as outlined by Foucault.

If the French cultural *rayonnement* falls into Foucault's panopticon system, the artistic conception of Paris as represented in the films studied in this chapter is designed along the lines of Michel de Certeau's concept of the city as text. Movement (walking) within the city at the individual level represents for de Certeau the creation of a unique discourse within the main discourse of the capital (in both senses of the term):

> L'acte de marcher est au système urbain ce que l'énonciation (le *speech act*) est à la langue ou aux énoncés proférés. Au niveau le plus élémentaire, il a en effet une triple fonction « énonciative » : c'est un procès d'*appropriation* du système topographique par le piéton … c'est une *réalisation* spatiale du lieu… enfin il implique des *relations* entre des positions différenciées, c'est-à-dire des « contrats » pragmatiques sous la forme de mouvement… (148)[119]

The appropriation of the space, its realization and the relations its nature entails are used in Claire Denis' films as core concepts manifesting in the creation of an urban identity, an *identité-relation* charting the locale (Martinique in Glissant's works, the *proche banlieue* in Denis') in relation to the main space.

Claire Denis' *J'ai pas sommeil* sets itself apart from *banlieue* cinema (it is set in Paris) yet does not quite fall into the postethnic cinema category of *Tout ce qui brille*. The characters of Théo and Camille are Others fleeing the space of the French Metropole in peculiar ways. Théo's means of escape are his music (he plays the violin), and also his physical departure from France to Martinique. The brutal murders Camille commits can be seen as a line of escape, as is his role in the gay Parisian nightlife. As I have already mentioned, music and dance are an integrant part of Denis' cinema, creating a commonality with Abdellatif Kechiche's symbolic use of music and dance in key scenes of *La Graine et le mulet* and *Vénus noire*. When Théo's wife Mona (Béatrice Dalle) comes back to her husband in an ultimate effort to engage in their marital and parental life, she offers him a pair of white shoes for his upcoming performance. The shoes are too small and, after Théo's return to the homeland and wish to bring their son with him is mentioned once

again, they are thrown out the window along with the rest of her gifts. Théo eventually decides to wear the shoes at his performance; in the meantime, Mona kidnaps their son to ensure his stay in Paris.

These white shoes are only a token of a wider discourse on the nomadic itineraries the two Martinican brothers trace throughout the city of Paris. Mona's gift of the ill fitted white shoes to Théo is symbolic of her attempts to interrupt her husband's move to Martinique, surreptitiously intruding in the realm of music that is in itself representative of his freedom and independence. In the concert scene, Théo virtuously plays the violin, ad-libbing Martiniquan tunes as the crowd gathers to dance while Camille stops in the club to see his brother play, minutes before being arrested. This scene is deeply contrasted by an earlier scene in which Camille, dressed in drag, lip-syncs to a slow French song, as a crowd of men watches from the balconies of an underground gay club. The difference between the two brothers is striking. Théo barely moves his body as his fingers masterly and naturally flow along the neck of the violin to embody the spirit of traditional Creole music; in contrast, Camille's slow walk along the makeshift catwalk, the incomprehensible movement of his lips along with the track and his empty stare stage him as a sexualized and ethnicized object for the gaze of other men.

The lack of communication between the two brothers (as expressed in their different approaches to music) is annihilated in the dance scene that is at the core of the film. The brothers meet at their mother's apartment to celebrate her birthday among family and friends. Camille and Théo take turns dancing with her to a rhythmic Creole piece. The fusion between Camille and his mother is later contrasted with her learning about her son's criminal activities and telling him before he is taken to jail: "Why did I give birth to you, Satan?"

Figure 3.2: Camille and Théo, the two brothers in Claire Denis' *J'ai pas sommeil* (1994)

The missed connections and intersections of the protagonists' individual lives are weaved together via the tropes of music and dance (rhythm), producing throughout the movie what Rancière has termed a "sensory fabric." The music in Denis' film is the glue that holds the pieces of the narrative together as a whole. The Creole music in particular is reminiscent of the Césairian focus on the local as representative of the global. At the mother's apartment, the dance scene and the conversations carried on in Creole underline the reality of exile for this Martiniquan family, provoking a larger sense of homelessness (rather than homesickness) for the main character Camille (this notion presented not as an excuse for his crimes, but partly an explanation to his loss of identity and self). *J'ai pas sommeil* is not a postethnic narrative per se, but rather a postcolonial story of exile from a unified home to the severed (center and margins) metropolitan space of Paris.

In addition, the music and dance tropes are recurrent in Claire Denis' 1994 composition as symbolic of each of the brothers' relationship to the space in which they evolve. Camille – whose character is based on real-life murderer Thierry Paulin – moves through the night in drag, adorning costumes made of faux leather, paid for with the money stolen from his crimes. What is most striking about Camille is the nonchalance he adorns as he walks in the streets of Paris *intra-muros*: he is a criminal, yet does not show any sign of worry that he might be caught. This

insouciance and knowledge of the "old Paris" is contrasted with Théo's uneasiness in the city and his desire for freedom: his favorite place to sleep with his son is the roof of his HLM (*Habitation à Loyer Modéré*, low-cost housing project) right on the border of the *boulevard periphérique*, looking onto the old Paris. As Théo is shown watching the sun rise on the imposing white Sacré-Coeur, he is not aware of the crimes his younger brother is committing in the same instant, right under the great church in the ill-famed neighborhood of Pigalle.

Théo's physical as well as identitarian place in Claire Denis' 1994 narrative is in concordance with the terms established by *banlieue* cinema, yet at the same time is moving towards contemporary *identité-relation*. Théo's life lies on the outskirts of Paris, not only physically but also ethnically. He does not belong to the Parisian lifestyle as underlined by his mother-in-law in the narrative and, in the vein of Césaire, longs for a return to home (to which Camille answers "Il y a rien là-bas" / "There's nothing there"). Michel de Certeau in *L'Invention du quotidien* takes the example of a passer-by standing on top of the former World Trade Center in New York: "Son élévation le transfigure en voyeur. Elle le met à distance. Elle mue en un texte qu'on a devant soi, sous les yeux, le monde qui ensorcelait et dont on était « possédé »" (140). As we are reminded of Rancière's work on emancipated spectatorship (see introduction), this critique by Michel de Certeau as it fits Claire Denis' *mise-en-scène* of urban misfit Théo comes to confirm the pre-existence (that is, pre-Ministère de l'Identité Nationale and pre-Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration) of Glissant's *identité-relation*. This image of the main character standing on the outskirts of town, at a distance yet elevated enough to look onto the main discourse, is in Denis' work representative of an ethnically charged social and cultural movement developing within her spectatorship: elevated, the Other is afforded the right to

contemplate the network of intersecting narratives that make up the pluriethnic Parisian landscape.

b) *35 Rhums* (2008)

The characters of *35 Rhums* entertain a different rapport to the city of Paris than Camille and Théo in *J'ai pas sommeil*. Denis' main character Lionel (Alex Descas) is a RER (Réseau Express Régional) train driver who lives in a *banlieue* apartment with his only daughter Joséphine.[120] *35 Rhums* begins with long shots of the RER trains driving into Paris in the early morning.[121] It is soon revealed that the driver in this opening scene is René, Lionel's colleague and friend, who is about to retire from the RATP (French regional railroad company). René will later commit suicide as he finds himself uprooted from his *quotidien* (his daily routine, his work), telling Lionel before he goes: "Vivre cette condition d'homme, c'est ça qui est dur. J'aurais voulu mourir jeune. Je suis pas fait pour cette vie. Le métro, tout ça… j'étais pas armé, pas préparé" ("Surrendering to this condition is what's so hard. I'd like to have died young … I don't have this life in me. The subway and all that… It hit me unarmed and unprepared." As the on-board camera (camera embarquée) in the train carries the spectators into Paris, the familiar sight of the Sacré-Coeur comes into focus: the church is not only a cultural landmark but also a point of reference for French citizens as well as foreigners. The Sacré-Coeur is a recurrent feature in Denis' films (in *J'ai pas sommeil*, Camille is seen fighting his lover at the bottom of the steps that lead to the Sacré-Coeur; later on, Théo gazes at the church from his apartment on the border of Paris) and symbolic of Antillean exile in Paris.[122]

Where *J'ai pas sommeil* vacillated between static and tracking shots as the characters made their way through the city within its limits, *35 Rhums* moves along the rails of the RER and the spectators' perception of the narrative is moved along these lines as well. There is a clear

break between Paris in the 1990s, still associated with *la marche* (walking) in the city as creator of discourse, and Paris in the late 2000s as it is guided by movement back and forth between the *banlieue* and city center: physical movement by RER or taxi (both systems of public transportation, relating to the public space), and a more global sense of movement – travelling/transfer of information – including the use of cell phones. The RER is an integrant part of the narrative in Kassovitz' *La Haine*: while the main protagonists are shown as static within the *banlieue* space for most of the movie, they are also shown taking the train to Paris in order to conduct an illegal drug deal with a man named Astérix. After the deal is done and the young men poorly attempt to crash a high-brow gathering at an art gallery, they find themselves missing the last train, and spending the night in the RER station, waiting for the trains to start running again in the morning.

Figure 3.3: Joséphine (Mati Diop) on the RER in *35 Rhums*

In contrast, *35 Rhums* brings agency to the main character Lionel the train driver, but also to the film's secondary characters: his friend Gabrielle is a taxi driver, the upstairs neighbor Noé

is often flying to distant countries, and even his daughter Joséphine commutes back and forth on the RER to her anthropology classes at the university and her soccer practice. Where Kassovitz' youths were left helpless, ignorant of how to properly use the RER timetables, Denis' protagonists have mastered the use of the Parisian public transportation system to the point where it has become an integrant part of their urban identity. In *J'ai pas sommeil*, Camille sought refuge in the metro station by his brother's house, and eventually hopped on the train to avoid having to confess his crimes to Théo. In Denis' *35 Rhums*, the use of public transportation in and out of the *banlieue* has become for its characters as common as cooking dinner or dressing down after work. The contrast between the ease demonstrated by Joséphine and her father Lionel on the train, and René's literal disintegration within the transportation realm further demonstrates an evolution in the rapport between physical movement in and out of the *banlieue* and its inhabitants.

3) Urban Identity, Transit and Relations

a) Modes of Transportation and Intersections of Identity

The urban ethnicity that is expressed via the use of the metro, RER or taxi (public transportation) in twenty-first century productions such as *35 Rhums* or *Tout ce qui brille* is formed of an intricate set of features (accessibility, landmarks, speed) that are to be conceived of individually and yet eventually as complementary of each other. The cultural ethnicity that is displayed in these features, and its reliance on everyday life factors, is one that brings us back to the notions of spectatorship, emancipation, and *identité-relation*. As mentioned before, the city of Paris functioned in the twentieth century along the lines of Michel Foucault's panopticon model with the cultural center broadcasting to the outskirts ("a long RER ride away") while exercising surveillance on these populations, a schema also used by Kristin Ross to explain

economic and cultural divides in *Fast Cars Clean Bodies*. To begin with, the nomadic travels of *banlieue* film protagonists magnetically attract them to and away from the postethnic French center, Paris. At the same time, these travels are as demonstrative as they are representative of the protagonists' habits and everyday life *(quotidien*): their *parcours* to, from and through the city have become part of this *quotidien*, and have consequently become part of their identity.

35 Rhums' Gabrielle – the taxi driver – lives in the same building as Joséphine, Lionel, and Noé, an HLM where conversations are struck on doorsteps, in elevators, or from one balcony to the other.[123] Yet it is in her taxi cab that Gabrielle is able to create her own discourse as she navigates the streets of Paris for her clients. Symbolically parked on "Rue de la Guadeloupe" having lunch, as a customer steps in her car, she instinctively begins to explain: "J'adore mon boulot, alors là…c'est jamais pareil! Moi je suis heureuse au volant. J'ai pas de patron sur le dos, je rencontre des gens intéressants…"[124] Gabrielle is defined in the movie not so much by her work as a taxi driver, but by the itineraries she takes in her cab: while it is arguable that these itineraries are chosen or rather directed by her clients, the taxi by essence offers more freedom in itineraries than the metro and its established lines for Gabrielle's character.

In addition, to afford to hire a cab means to belong to a higher social bracket than the youths in *La Haine*. The space of the car is more intimate than that of the metro, where private conversations are avoided as passengers often have to stand in close proximity, as demonstrated in Figure 3.4. of *35 Rhums*, showing Josephine standing in a crowded RER car. In the more confined space of the taxi cab, Gabrielle connects with passengers in a way Lionel cannot as he sits alone in the RER driver's cabin. His intimate space is that of the home and of his extremely close relationship to his daughter (Denis has explained in several interviews that the protagonists' relationship is inspired from her own mother's relationship with Denis' grandfather

in a single parent household). Gabrielle, on the other hand, lives alone and longs for Lionel, finding her emotional salvation in the human relations struck in her transitory workplace.

Figure 3.4: The HLM where *35 Rhums'* protagonists reside

Figure 3.5: Gabrielle driving her taxi in *35 Rhums*

In *35 Rhums*, each narrative is driven along the lines of each protagonist's individual travels within the urban space. Like the rails of the metro or the streets of Paris, these narratives intersect at strategic points. In *Un Ethnologue dans le métro* (*In the Metro*, 1986), Marc Augé explains:

> In that way, my itineraries resemble those of others with whom I rub shoulders every day in the subway without knowing where they went to school, where they lived and worked, where they are at, and where they are going, while at that very instant our glances meet and turn away after sometimes lingering for just a moment. They too are possibly drafting an inventory or making a summary – who knows? – contemplating a change of life and, by extension, a change of subway lines. (6)

In the Metro is Augé's analysis of the meaning and impact of subway travel on an individual's Parisian life, as each stop reveals to be named after a French historical event or figure, consequently guiding the traveler, influencing his own path in subterranean Paris. This topography inevitably excludes Others who are foreign to the metro system, and whose personal history and collective memory do not include the names of French historic battles or political figures. What do "Victor Hugo," "Voltaire," "Charles de Gaulle," or "Richelieu" mean to the foreign traveler, and even more importantly to the ex-centered *banlieue* resident? [125] The Parisian metro system exists in concordance with the Haussmanian cartography of the capital (wide open boulevards with corner cafés lined with bay windows) and the general sense of French grandeur that transpires through every building and landmark such as Notre-Dame or Le Louvre. The physical geography of the French capital mirrors the publishing situation that excludes Francophone writers – on paper and on bookshelves – from the main literary sphere (see Chapter II). The city as text or, in this dissertation, as a reflection of a recent resurgence in nationalist and colonialist propaganda, excludes the Other not only in its nomenclature, but also in the matter of *speed*.

Individual movement in a car or in the metro is one of two constitutive parts to the urban postethnic identity I am concerned with in this dissertation, the other being the notion of speed. In *Speed and Politics*, Paul Virilio writes: “For the mass of unemployed, demobilized workers without an occupation, Paris is a tapestry of trajectories, a series of streets and avenues in which they roam, for the most part, with neither goal nor destination, subject to a police repression intended to control their wanderings” (29). Here Virilio insists on the physical gap that separates *banlieue* dwellers from the inhabitants of Paris proper, characterized as a modern hub of mobility. This physical gap becomes identitarian in nature when the sedentary *banlieue* inhabitants wander within the city-center, becoming nomadic and therefore anti-modern disruptive elements, as they do not possess the knowledge to navigate the roadmaps (street and metro) of the capital. This concept is reminiscent of Matthieu Kassovitz’s *La Haine* and its protagonists’ inability to properly use the metro/RER.

Additionally, for Virilio, speed appears to be an integrant factor of state power in modern societies: he writes about “dromology,” the science of speed, and “dromocracy,” the exercise of political power through the use of speed and movement.[126] For Virilio, the use of speed and its control by the State will eventually (at the time of his writing, 1977) widen the gap between the sedentary populations of the *banlieue* and the ultra-mobile center:

> With the realization of dromocratic type progress, humanity will stop being diverse. It will tend to divide only into *hopeful populations* (who are allowed the hope that they will reach, in the future, someday, the speed that they are accumulating, which will give them access to the possible – that is, to the project, the decision, the infinite: *speed is the hope of the West*) and *despairing populations*, blocked by the inferiority of their technological vehicles, living and subsisting in a finite world. (70)

The concept of speed itself as it guarantees access to technological advances, therefore to modernity, is an integrant part of the posturban, postethnic population that wanders from the

outskirts of Paris to the city-center as demonstrated in contemporary "other" films such as *Tout ce qui brille* (Nakache, 2010). One's access to speed can be extremely limited and is usually determined by one's geographical location in the urban design, by one's social and cultural status, and by one's ethnicity – other than *Français de souche* (entirely French).

Against Virilio's argument, not having access to speed does not necessarily prevent these geographical, social and cultural outcasts from accessing the city-center, becoming *poachers* of space, time and speed. Michel de Certeau in *L'Invention du quotidien* noted that while the concept of the city is for its borders to keep out undesirable subjects, these subjects (who he refers to as "microbes") inevitably find their way into the walls of the city, seeping through cracks of the system:

> Analyser les pratiques microbiennes … qu'un système urbanistique devait gérer ou supprimer et qui survivent à son dépérissement; suivre le pullulement de ces procédures qui, bien loin d'être contrôlées ou éliminées par l'administration panoptique, se sont renforcées dans une proliférante illégitimité, développées et insinuées dans les réseaux de surveillance … au point de constituer … des créativités subjectives que cachent seulement les dispositifs et les discours, aujourd'hui affolés, de l'organisation observatrice. (146)[127]

Adrian Fielder in "Poaching on Public Space: Urban Autonomous Zones in French *Banlieue* Films" explains: "The operative word [Michel de Certeau] suggests to describe this process is "poaching," which serves as a metaphor for the ways users of pre-established orders come to inhabit (whether illicitly or not) textual systems of which they are not the authors" (*Cinema and the City* 276). Nakache's film shows several instances of "poaching" by her two protagonists, Ely and Lila. Both girls are tired of living "à dix minutes de Paris" ("ten minutes away from Paris"). While this distance was never problematic for their parents, it is for the two young women in the advanced age of transportation and communication, marked in the movie by the use of social markers such as mobile phones, frequent rides in taxi cabs, and the desire for

expensive brands of clothing. Where *La Haine*'s protagonists failed at understanding and using these codes, *Tout ce qui brille*'s Ely and Lila have mastered the use of communication and transportation as social elevators.

b) *Tout ce qui brille* (2010)

In Géraldine Nakache's *Tout ce qui brille* (2010), two young *banlieue* women are seen sitting on the Esplanade de l'Arche de la Défense, facing Paris and longing to permanently settle in the capital. The viewer is facing forward with them, thus allowed to look beyond the border that separates them from the capital as through glass, towards the Arc de Triomphe, one of Paris' iconic landmarks. Desperate to approach "all that glitters," both women circulate within the capital, using deceptive means of communication and transportation to attain their goals: not paying for their cab, sneaking into a high-end club party, hiding in a bourgeois building in Neuilly, and walking home to their parents' HLM apartment. The documenting of their comings and goings is indicative of a new trend in today's film production which, unlike earlier representations of the *banlieue* and its inhabitants, depicts second and third-generation immigrants as extremely mobile and the social borders that separate them from Paris as porous. This innovative use of targeted, skilled individual movement within the urban setting arises at a time where the fixed image of the *banlieue* youth revealed in Kassovitz' *La Haine* (1995) no longer matches the reality of contemporary France.

Tout ce qui brille (*TCQB*) compares and contrasts the stories of two friends, Ely and Lila, who have grown up and spent most of their adult life in the same suburb. The friends live in Puteaux, a *banlieue* town (but not a *cité*) northwest of Paris and adjacent to Neuilly-sur-Seine, the wealthiest town on the outskirts of the capital.[128] Being from Puteaux is synonymous with a cultural and socioeconomic clash between the large finance center of La Défense and the blue-

collar population living in HLMs. Additionally, being from Puteaux does not connote the same financial and cultural background as being from Neuilly, which generally connotes high-brow, aristocrat or old bourgeois families whose homes are large apartments and possibly entire *hôtels particuliers*. The two towns are symbolically separated by the Seine and also by the Arche de la Défense, a business center and a major place of transit (physical and financial) between Paris and the outskirts. The modern Arche, built in 1989, stands opposite to the historic Arc de Triomphe on the Champs-Elysées.[129] Puteaux, by its historical (industrial) and socioeconomic status, differs from Chanteloup-les-Vignes, the *cité* that is depicted in *La Haine*, composed mostly of high-rise low cost apartment buildings and populated mainly by immigrant families.

Figure 3.6: Ely (Géraldine Nakache) and Lila (Leïla Bekhti) on the Esplanade de l'Arche de la Défense in Puteaux

Figure 3.7: The heroines walk home to Puteaux from Neuilly as the sun rises over Paris and the Arc de Triomphe

The sociocultural and ethnic differences depicted in *TCQB* are not as definite as they were in *La Haine*. In Géraldine Nakache's first work as a filmmaker, her own character Ely has experienced life within Paris and worked at a law firm before losing everything in the economic crisis and having to return home to Puteaux to live with her parents and share a room with her younger sister. Her childhood friend Lila (Leïla Bekhti) has never lived in Paris and her life is very much anchored in Puteaux where she lives with her mother and is in a relationship with Eric, a sandwich stand manager at the local mall. Lila dreams of a fancier lifestyle, her bedroom walls lined with shopping bags that read "Dior," "Chanel," "Gucci" and the like. She is the initiator of the two heroines' intrusion in the bourgeois Parisian world, one that glitters but that is not theirs to enter. Both Ely and Lila's family units are reminiscent of twentieth century *banlieue* filmography: Ely's father is a taxi driver who does not see the need to actually live within Paris, he is content with his travels to and from the capital (reminiscent of the characters of Gabrielle and Lionel in *35 Rhums*); Lila's father left his family and returned to Morocco where he

remarried, leaving both Lila and his mother with the illusion of his possible coming home (not adhering to the French lifestyle and returning home like Théo in *J'ai pas sommeil*). Lila lives alone with her mother, another single-parent unit, which has also become a common trope in *banlieue* cinema.

Even more so than the family background of the heroines, the use of the urban space in *TCQB* in 2010 stands in deep contrast with the use of the very same space, Paris, in the quintessential *banlieue* film *La Haine* (1995). In *La Haine*, the group led by Vinz shows difficulties using the Parisian transit system and the urban space in general. As mentioned earlier, they miss the last train and are forced to spend the night in the RER station. Earlier in the film, the group tries to enter a bourgeois building where their drug dealer supposedly lives. The three men are unable to use proper language after they ring another resident's bell in order to be let into the building. Enraged and yelling profanities, they are finally allowed to enter after the concierge asks them for the purpose of their visit. Part of this scene is shot from the eye of the building's security camera itself, emphasizing the state of surveillance the youth group is constantly living under.

In *Tout ce qui brille*, Lila lies when she and Ely are given a ride by their newfound bourgeois friends and ask to be dropped off in Neuilly, rue du Château ("Castle Street"). Ely panics as she tries to enter the right code into the high-end building's security system. Similarly to Kassovitz' film, this scene is also shot from inside the building with the black cast iron gate filling the screen, symbolizing the heavy barrier that separates the two heroines from the bourgeois world of Neuilly. Eventually, Lila enters the right code, to Ely's surprise (she later explains that one of her friends used to babysit in that building, and she used to visit her there).

In the fifteen years that separate the two films, the evolution of the second-generation immigrant population has influenced the cinematic industry of the Other into producing more fluid portrayals of France's outcasts. The new *banlieue* generation depicted in *TCQB* is still subjected to Foucault's panopticon system, but unlike the youths in *La Haine*, they are equipped with the "microbe-like," "poaching" tactics Michel de Certeau observed in *L'Invention du quotidien*, and have not become masters, but apprentices of the concept Paul Virilio named "dromology."

The shift in focus from *banlieue* cinema and unemployed immigrant youth in the 1990s and early 2000s (*Trilogie Urbaine, La Haine, L'Esquive*) to a higher social bracket, more Westernized group in the 2010s is comparable to the shift in publishing and paratext exposed in Chapter II of this dissertation. Instead of focusing on stark differences between what is supposed to be intrinsically French and what is not (center vs. periphery), contemporary films such as *Tout ce qui brille* – and others in the same vein, such as *Les Intouchables* - point to the blending or networking of populations, and the crossing and blending of individual storylines.[130] In addition to appearing as a mark of resistance to the well-established *banlieue* cinema genre, these contemporary narratives have the opportunity to appeal to a larger audience. In choosing to portray Puteaux rather than Chanteloup-les-Vignes (*La Haine*), and in representing today's phenomenon of Relation as representative of a new urban identity as opposed to the polar oppositions of French vs non-French, Géraldine Nakache is possibly seeking access to a more varied viewership. Against the fixed categories of "banlieue" and "beur" cinema, Nakache produces a film that is in line with the fragmentation of identities that is inevitably created by the contemporary use of speed in means of transportation and means of communication. These individual, fragmented identities are built of connections and encounters with others: in *TCQB*,

Lila's ability to "break the code" of the bourgeois apartment building offers her a glimpse at the Neuilly life she is lusting after.

4) Film Choral and Rhizomatic Identities

The "film choral" (choral film) or "film mosaïque" genre is not absolutely new as it was used, for example, in Claude Lelouche's *Les Uns et les autres* in 1981.[131] In a film choral, independent/singular storylines intersect at certain moments, bringing the film's characters in the same place/space: they might or might not be aware of the encounter, one that can last for several minutes or only long enough for them to pass by each other, each reaching a separate final destination. French film critic Jacques Mandelbaum gave this definition of film choral in a 2007 *Le Monde* article:

> "Qu'est qu'un film choral ? Etymologiquement, c'est un genre qui emprunte sa définition à la forme musicale du chœur. Cinématographiquement, c'est une œuvre qui se distingue par deux caractéristiques majeures : la transformation de la plupart des protagonistes en personnages principaux, la nécessité de faire se croiser leurs destins selon un plan préétabli."[132]

The genre has developed in recent years as a reflection of the advances of communication technologies, of the media and of individual travels and trajectories, emphasizing the connectedness of the world's population in the twenty-first century. Choral films are most often shot in one metropolis, the set of the narrative's random encounters. Claude Lelouch's film *Les Uns et les autres* was principally set in Paris, Woody Allen's *To Rome with Love* (2012) in Rome, and Richard Curtis' *Love Actually* (2002) in London.

This last section of Chapter III focuses on choral films that are set in Paris and bring to this study additional material regarding contemporary representations of the Other in French cinema: Michael Haneke's *Code Inconnu: Récit incomplet de divers voyages* (*Code Unknown: Incomplete Tales of Several Journeys*, 2000) and Djinn Carrénard's recent feature *Donoma*

(2011). These choral films are, given their intrinsic nature, unstructured representations of essential Otherness: the individual is *mis-en-scène* in opposition and at the same time in relation to the rest of the world, his/her storyline punctuated with chance meetings with other individuals. The result is a rhizome-like narrative structure that is representative of the notion of *identité-relation*.

For Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, a rhizome is a model of thought that is not traditional in that it is not vertical, hierarchical, or even tree-like, which would involve a cause and effect dynamic: "Principes de connexion et d'hétérogénéité: n'importe quel point d'un rhizome peut être connecté avec n'importe quel autre, et doit l'être. C'est très différent de l'arbre ou de la racine qui fixent un point, un ordre" (*Rhizome* Editions de Minuit 1976, 24).[133] Instead, the rhizomic system is one that allows for multiples trajectories, without a beginning or an end, traveling more or less on a horizontal plane and allowing for lines of flights: "Les multiplicités se définissent par le dehors: par la ligne abstraite, ligne de fuite ou de deterritorialization suivant laquelle elles changent de nature en se connectant avec d'autres" (24).[134] The film choral is hence by essence rhizomic in its structure, representative of a model of thought that is not traditional, not logical and not diachronic, therefore allowing for the display of *identité-relations* as they are formed at each intersection.

In addition, the multiple layers thus formed by the various trajectories and intersections are termed as "plateaus" by Deleuze and Guattari, thus allowing again for a multilayered schema of identity (or identities) as opposed to a linear one: "Nous appelons *plateau* toute multiplicité connectable avec d'autres par tiges souterraines superficielles, de manière à former et étendre un rhizome … Chaque plateau peut être lu à n'importe quelle place, et mis en rapport avec n'importe quel autre" (63).[135] There are several *plateaus* in place in Haneke's *Code Inconnu* as

well as Carrénard's *Donoma* that are not only related to individual storylines but also to the much larger themes of ideology, Otherness and immigration.

In the *Emancipated Spectator*, Jacques Rancière underlines that the spectator of art (in the museum, theater or cinema) has – through his/her connectedness to the piece of art, connectedness that has long been denied – the capacity to emancipate him or herself from his/her passive role as spectator and the assumed "message" of the piece of art, via a form of mimesis and recognition of the very unity between the spectacle and spectator. Rancière writes:

> [Aesthetic experience] is a multiplication of connections and disconnections that reframe the relation between bodies, the world they live in and the way they are 'equipped' to adapt to it. It is a multiplicity of folds and gaps in the fabric of common experience that change the cartography of the perceptible, the thinkable and the feasible. As such, it allows for new modes of political construction of common objects and new possibilities of collective enunciation. However, this political effect occurs under the condition of an original disjunction, an original effect, which is the suspension of any direct relationship between cause and effect. (73)

The deconstruction of the art piece is for Rancière the basis onto which interpersonal identities can be formed or recreated. The deconstruction that is at the source of the film choral could then, according to Rancière's theory, enable connections between the spectators' personal experiences, bringing them closer to the purpose of art or rather, its capacities (capacity to promote emotion and relation as opposed to pure and simple display). The filmmaking practices of Michael Haneke and of the film choral genre in general permit the deconstruction of narratives to the extent that the effect echoes the lived experiences of a disconnected, individualistic spectatorship.

I have mentioned before the ability to own and use speed as a requirement to be part of the fixed urban identity displayed in Paris: the notion of speed (along with its inevitable link to the diachronic effect) can bring people together as well as pull them apart, unforming and

reforming nuclei of populations or tribes at any given moment and any given place. The projection onto the screen of the reality of this process is an example of what Rancière believes art should be able to achieve: to touch on the spectators' experiences as to create a sense of togetherness in lieu of an ideological simile of togetherness representing conforming, one-dimensional identities.

a) *Code Inconnu* (2000)

Michael Haneke is a prolific Austrian screenwriter and producer whose oeuvres have been awarded prestigious prizes. *The White Ribbon* won the Cannes Palme d'Or in 2009, as did *Amour* (2012), which additionally received the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film (2012). Renowned internationally for his vivid renditions of social stratification in Austrian, German, and French culture, Haneke focuses his work on what Ben McCann and David Sorfa have termed "critical realism:" "By this we mean that his films engage not so much with 'reality,' although being very much involved with historical events, but with the problems and possibilities of presenting such a reality through a fictional, normative medium" (*The Cinema of Michael Haneke* 2). The rapport between the filmmaker and the spectator, tied with the possible intention on the part of the filmmaker to display reality – that is to produce a screen rendition that is as true to contemporary social and cultural events as possible – is one that can cause critics to fall onto a treacherous path. Whether it is the filmmaker's intention to reproduce (meaning to create a picture-perfect rendition of) reality on film is not as valid a question as is the end result, the product that is projected onto the screen and viewed by the spectators.

Film critic Amos Vogel explains in his 1996 piece entitled "Of Nonexisting Continents: The Cinema of Michael Haneke":

> At times it seems as if Haneke – opting for the spectator's freedom to arrive at his own conclusions – does not realize how all cinema, of necessity, even the most radical anti-narrative avant-garde cinema – inevitably implies a modicum of control, if not subjugation: as soon as the first image appears on the screen, the spectator's attention is forcibly focused on images, events, and sounds not of his own choosing. Thus cinema remains, at all times, a manipulative medium. All filmmaking inevitably entails control over the spectator: it is the degree and the kind of control that will vary from filmmaker to filmmaker. Haneke's stated intention to have the viewer come to his own insights and explanations presupposes, in its purest form, a level playing field that cannot exist. (74)

Vogel's critique of Haneke as a filmmaker gives us insight on the role of the *metteur-en-scène*, the director (the one who shows, as mentioned in Chapter I with Abdellatif Kechiche's *Vénus Noire*, as well as the curators' power over their exhibits, and also the publishers' manipulation of the literary medium as seen in Chapter II with the destructuration of the paratext). The packaging that presents the Other, and specifically in this study the contemporary urban Other, is crucial to the image that is exhibited for the public, and to the identitarian associations hence created/ formed in the spectators' minds. What Haneke seeks to achieve, the reaction of the spectator, is something Kechiche also mentioned in his interview about *Vénus Noire*.[136] What are the techniques/elements in Haneke's filmmaking that render this process feasible and how does it fit within Rancière's concept of spectator emancipation?

Code Unknown begins with a group of deaf children observing a young deaf girl demonstrating and signing a feeling. As they attempt to understand the performance, each of their guesses is followed by the young girl's indicating that their interpretation is wrong. The little girl eventually cowers in front of the class, turning her back to the rest of the children and hiding her face away from them. After a short cut, the spectator is faced with a young man on a busy Parisian street trying to enter a residential building. His attempts at punching in the right code are in vain: the door will not open. Eventually, a woman comes down and opens the door, walks with him, and explains that the code has changed. The young man is Jean, a rural teenager

who refuses to take after his father's responsibilities at the family farm, and the woman, Anne (Juliette Binoche), is his older brother George's girlfriend. While Anne understands Jean's frustration with his father, she makes it really clear that there is no room for him in the cramped Parisian apartment she already shares with George.

Figure 3.8: Amadou hailing Jean in the street (*Code Unknown*)

The spectator has already been exposed to two types of codes (the young girl's signing and the building door's digital code) when the scene unfolds onto the first crossing of individual narratives in the film, which parallels with a convergence of codes. Anne sends Jean to the local pastry shop to buy a sandwich and on his way out, Jean throws a crumpled paper bag onto the lap of a beggar, a middle-aged woman sitting across from the pastry shop. Another young man named Amadou, of African origin, *interpelle* Jean (hails him) and asks him – eventually forcefully – to apologize to the woman, whom Jean disrespected by his gesture (another form of interpellation, drawing her out of her reverie by throwing the crumpled bag onto her lap). As the

two young men begin to brawl, Anne comes back to the scene, and soon enough two policemen join them. The policemen are set to sort out the dispute, yet arrest the young African man and the beggar – who turns out to be an illegal Romanian immigrant who will be deported later in the film.

Figure 3.9: Two policemen arrest Amadou in *Code Unknown*

The crossing of identities in this opening scene is the result of a series of *interpellations*, which is a term originally used by Louis Althusser regarding Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs, see Introduction). According to Althusser, individuals are constantly hailed by those ISAs, forcing them to become participants of society, and eventually subjects to the dominant ideology:

> As a first formulation I shall say: *all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects*, by the functioning of the category of the subject … ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have call *interpellation* or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most

> commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there!'" (*Lenin and Philosophy* 173-4).

Interpellations are, however, not always inscribed in a dialectic of superior/subaltern rapport: in using the film choral structure in *Code Unknown*, Haneke demonstrates that *interpellations* happen when there is a crisis at the juncture of two or more *plateaus*.

In a key scene of the 2000 movie, Anna is seen ironing while watching television in her Parisian apartment. Her activities are interrupted by the screams of a young girl, presumably the young deaf girl seen in the opening scene.[137] Anna stops ironing, mutes the television, listens to the voice calling for help, and finishes her glass of wine before returning to her activities once the screaming has stopped. She is clearly disturbed, yet decides not to answer the *interpellation* to which she has been subjected. In this scene, the deaf girl is Other, marked by an external sign of Otherness which is not her ethnicity but her deafness, her use of sign language, and her inability to use the codes of the rest of society (here, the norm). In this scene, Haneke cleverly superimposes the different plateaus of Otherness that interrupt the seemingly smooth social order of contemporary French society.

Another key scene that is representative of this strategy takes place in Amadou's household. His father, a cab driver, has received a call to come home (a call he answered in his native tongue, an African dialect, in the space of the taxi cab, which disturbed his French-speaking passenger). This first *interpellation* takes him home where both his sons are having trouble with the social order: Amadou has just spent a few hours in prison (after the brawl with Jean in the opening scene) and his younger brother is being accused of dealing marijuana at his school. The scene, split in half, resembles a theater with a stage for the actors and, facing them, seating for the audience. On one end of the living room, the father is speaking to his son in their native tongue, but the son answers only in French. On the other end of the living room, the

father's two wives and their children are observing. A few minutes later, Amadou's part of the family is shown at the dinner table: his sister, his mother, and his little sister, who is deaf. While his sibling is having argument with their mother (the mother answers in her African dialect) about the father's decision to return to Africa ("D'ici un mois il aura trouvé une nouvelle épouse, et elle aura la moitié de mon âge"/ "In less than a month he'll take a new wife half my age"), Amadou is having a conversation with his little sister in sign language, independently from the main argument. He is explaining to her that their father will not be alone, as family in his native land will surround him. Their conversation ends with the little girl asking where her father has gone. Amadou's answer "Africa" is immediately followed by her asking, "Where is Africa?"

This scene is rhizomatic in essence: it represents an overlapping of the plateau notions of language, culture, gender, signs, origin and location. Each of these plateaus is already in and of itself a rhizome, a network of connections between France and Africa, men and women, one and other, words and signs. Additionally, these plateaus are interconnected to the film's narrative itself: not only is Amadou proficient in sign language (his interaction with Anne in the street was fortuitous and yet their inability to communicate and cooperate after the brawl is *in sine* with Anne's passive refusal to help the deaf little girl next door), he is also seen throughout the film as a member of an African drum corps, one whose rhythms go on for several scenes at the end of *Code Unknown*.

While the cuts all along Haneke's movie are abrupt and slightly infrequent, the end of the film presents the spectator with still abrupt, yet shorter and more frequent cuts. The difference is that these cuts are tied together by the music of the drums, linking these last key scenes together where there was only silence marking the earlier cuts. The shorter cuts enable the narrative to abruptly move from one storyline to the other, while the beat of the drum corps transforms into

this *tissu sensible*, the existence of which Rancière seeks to demonstrate in *The Emancipated Spectator*: the fabric that ties all individual stories together, which entices mimesis on the part of the spectators, eventually leading to their emancipation from the basic dialectic of the spectacle (see reference p.11). Haneke's cinematic finesse lies in proving Rancière's theory to be applicable in the case of the film choral: the genre does not only prove to be an ever-progressive and ever-regenerative conduit for an appreciation and active representation of Glissant's conceptual *identité-relation* (of Otherness in contact and in movement), its rhizomatic application is an echo to alternative artistic productions of the Other.

b) *Donoma* (2011)

Djinn Carrénard's self-produced and self-publicized 2011 feature *Donoma* was selected at the 2010 Cannes festival by the ACID (Association du Cinéma Indépendant pour sa Diffusion) to receive additional financial support, and was awarded the Prix Louis-Delluc du Premier Film in 2011, a prize awarded for a first movie (Abeur-Zaimeche was a recipient in 2001).[138] Carrénard is a young director from Haiti, who has lived in Togo and French Guiana before heading to Paris to study philosophy. He did not graduate, but instead founded the Diaph1Kat film association, which is responsible for the production of *Donoma*, but also short films such as *White Girl in Her Panty* (2008), filmed in New York with recurring characters also present in *Donoma*, and *Le nègre joyeux* (2007), a discussion on colonial imagery in Paris set against the backdrop of a biracial couple's quarrel, again with recurring characters.

A trademark of the new "cinema guerilla" genre, *Donoma* is said to have been produced with a budget of only 150 euros. All the filming was done with a hand-held camera, all the editing was done on Carrénard's own laptop computer. Carrénard's promotion of his first feature film is strategically engrained in the contemporary French Metropolitan culture of Relation,

using both online means of communication and everyday life experience: the film was advertised on the social network Facebook with a page titled "Je veux voir Donoma" ("I want to see Donoma") asking potential spectators to volunteer and donate. In addition, Carrénard and his crew spent hours in the busy Châtelet metro station showing the preview of their film to public transit passengers on a portable DVD player, while stickers and T-shirts were created to make *Donoma* visible in France's *quotidien* (everyday life) – on the street – as opposed to regular cinema or television trailers and advertisements. In his *dossier de presse*, Carrénard writes: "Je me suis dit que cette épopée pouvait être passionante, je voulais que des internautes puissent nous suivre depuis le lancement désargenté de cette aventure, jusqu'à son succès hypothétique. Nous avons donc réuni une communauté sur Facebook, à qui on balançait des vidéos marrantes expliquant le projet, présentant les participants, expliquant nos objectifs" (8).[139] Carrénard's work as a producer and a screenwriter is embedded into the contemporary culture of networks and connections: the young Haitian director has successfully mastered all resources and tools in his digital and cultural environment in order to balance the original lack of funding for *Donoma*.

Most of the seven individual narratives in the film choral *Donoma* intersect in the Parisian metro. It is in the metro that young photographer Chris randomly picks a lover, looking exclusively through the lens of her camera. Their relationship comes to an end when her newfound lover Dama breaks the silence Chris had imposed on their affair. Chris finds herself in the metro again, in the same car as Dacio and his girlfriend Salma, who believes she has been chosen as a martyr after awaking one morning to stigmata on her hands and feet. Salma later meets neo-Nazi Catholic fanatic Raïné in the RER, confirming her suspicions that she was born to walk a holy path (their encounter proves, however, to be destructive). Earlier in the film, Salma and Dacio are seen quarreling on the metro/ RER platform: he is having an affair with his

Spanish teacher Analia, who is in truth manipulating him with a vengeance for misbehaving and disrupting her class. Analia and Salma are later seen sitting in the same church, unaware of each other's existence or of how their lives are tied to one other through Dacio.

There is no global plot in *Donoma*: each storyline focuses on a couple, a trope that has been Carrénard's focal point in all his works: "Un seul type de récit m'intéresse vraiment, ce sont les histoires de couples…Je suis parti de ces récits passionnants, je les ai laissé mariner, le temps de trouver une métaphore fictive, le temps de me les approprier en tant que scénariste" (10).[140] In truth, Carrénard pairs his characters in situations that may or may not unfold to become romantic relationships. *Donoma* as a film choral thus adopts concepts that are dear to the Situationists and the advocates of *identité-relation*: individual trajectories create a network of identities in the city as text, these identities are then expanded based on a series of encounters, inscribing their fortuitous character against the fixed social boundaries of the French society of spectacle.

Figure 3.10: Intersection of narratives in the metro: Dacio, Salma and Chris in *Donoma* (2011)

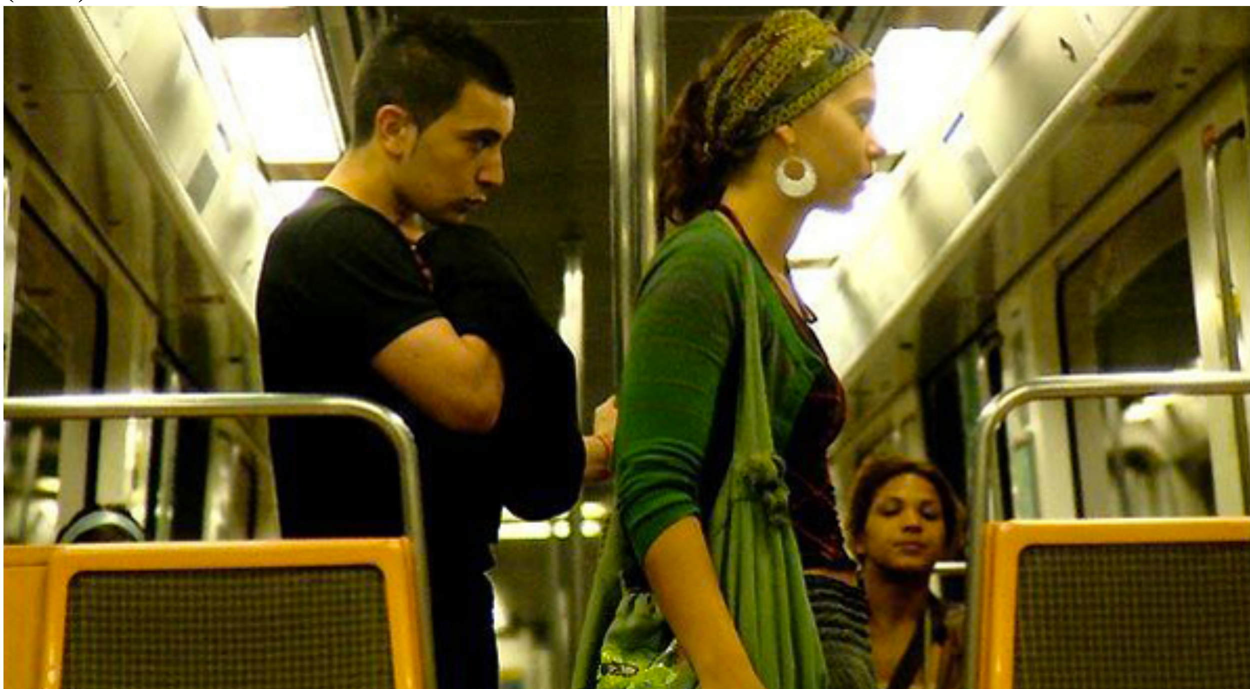


Figure 3.11: Chris and Dama's "chance" encounter in the metro in *Donoma*

In *L'Invention du Quotidien*, Michel de Certeau uses the term *dérive* ("drift") when addressing the act of reading as a basic form of spectatorship to the order of capitalism, but more specifically one during which the reader is able to create his own text, based on his personal experiences:

> En fait, l'activité liseuse présente au contraire tous les traits d'une production silencieuse : dérive à travers la page, métamorphose du texte par l'œil voyageur, improvisations et expectations de significations induites de quelques mots, enjambements d'espaces écrits, danse éphémère … Le lisible se change en mémorable … Cette mutation rend le texte habitable à la manière d'un appartement loué. Elle transforme la propriété de l'autre en lieu emprunté, un moment, par un passant. (XLIX)[141]

In inevitably linking the concepts of reading and spectatorship to those of social geography and the appropriation of space, De Certeau's theory is aligned with Guy Debord and the Situationists' critical work on "psychogeography."[142] In their manifesto, the Situationists declared: "In a *dérive* one or more persons during a certain period drop their usual motives for movement and action, their relations, their work and leisure activities, and let themselves be

drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there" (*The Situationnist International* 34-5). The act of drifting in the urban space is characterized by fluidity, overcoming the barriers and other borders that physically and socially ostracize France's Others from the Parisian city-center. Geographical drifting is in this sense similar to artistic drifting as elaborated by De Certeau, as both practices include the temporary appropriation of literary or physical space, which in turn allows for the production of an original and unique type of individual discourse. The city, when read as a text, is therefore generative of these new Relation stories as displayed in Carrénard's *Donoma*, demonstrating once more that Rancière's notion of "emancipated spectator" is a liberating act from the constraints of the spectacle as well as a social act of cultural disruption.

Every scene in *Donoma* is filmed with a hand-held camera and includes little to no music, putting the spectator in the position of a *narrateur omniscient*, one who knows more about each individual plot than the characters themselves. Carrénard aims at an accurate representation of reality: the combination of his camera techniques, his "guerilla" mode of action, and the way he directed his actors points to a will to detach himself and his work from the official trend of mainstream motion pictures about the Other. Carrénard explains: "Je me suis retrouvé avec mon script, et avec une exigence: je voulais du réalisme, je ne voulais pas qu'on voit jouer mes personnages en entendant le texte écrit, j'ai donc décidé de ne pas leur donner le scenario…jamais" (10).[143] This directing technique in particular differs drastically from Haneke's in *Code Unknown*: while both directors aimed at realism, Haneke opted for a scripted form of acting, as opposed to Carrénard's uninterrupted, ever-evolving flow of discourse. In choosing to let his actors' particular traits bleed into the characters', Carrénard finds himself more in line with Abdellatif Kechiche. Kechiche has become known in the film industry for his

drastic, emotionally as well as physically exhausting demands as far as acting is concerned. The current controversy with the cast of *La Vie d'Adèle* (*Blue is The Warmest Color*) echoes his directing of Yahima Torres in *Vénus Noire*: "Si je fais rejouer les scènes plusieurs fois, c'est pour que les comédiens s'oublient pour que finalement sur le plateau plus personne ne sache ce qu'il se passe" ("I have scenes acted multiple times because I want actors to forget themselves, so that eventually no one on the set understands what is happening," *Tonet* 9).[144]

André Bazin in *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma* clarifies the notions of realism and illusion in regard to cinema. Bazin explains that while realism can be achieved and is usually accomplished at the beginning process of filmmaking, the director him or herself presents good chances of losing track of what is real and what is illusion (realism in cinema is after all an illusion of reality). He or she then falls into the trap of straying away from realism and falling deeper and deeper into the realm of illusion.[145] Bazin notes that illusion is the inevitable product of attempting to portray reality: "it is a necessary illusion but it quickly induces a loss of awareness of the reality itself, which becomes identified in the mind of the spectator with its cinematographic representation" (27).

With the illusion of realism a difficult goal to achieve and one that may engender a complete loss of touch with reality for the filmmaker, Bazin underlines that the spectator plays an active part in this evolving process. As an introduction to modern cinema, Bazin uses Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* (1941) as an example of a genre that empowers the spectator to interpret the plot in a holistic manner. Film editing in *Citizen Kane* has evolved from a chronological succession of scenes to a larger sense of the narrative facilitated by the various camera techniques used by Welles.[146] Bazin writes: "It is no longer the editing that selects what we see … it is the mind of the spectator which is forced to discern, in a sort of parallelepiped of reality

with the screen as its cross-section, the dramatic spectrum proper to the scene" (28). Along the lines of Rancière's theory, Bazin places the spectator in a space of participation and creation. That the spectator's concept of reality can be altered with the realism displayed on screen (which is an illusion) is a consequence that is sought by filmmakers, as we have seen in the cases of Michael Haneke and Abdellatif Kechiche. Bazin's notion of the aesthetics of realism in cinema forces us to question Djinn Carrénard's production and dialectic of realism in relation with the notions of emancipation and Relation. In the contemporary Cinema of the Other, are the identities produced on screen and interpreted by the spectators reflective of a switch in French socio-cultural and ethnic norms, or on the other hand, do these film productions intend to induce change in the conception of French identity?

In *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?*, André Bazin studies postwar Italian films in their representation or rather production of realism (facilitated by the absence of professional actors and studio sets).[147] In his chapter dedicated to the 1948 Italian film *Bicycle Thief* (*Ladri di Biciclette* by filmmaker Vittorio De Sica), Bazin begins with the inevitable exhaustion of realism in cinema, calling it an "impasse" and stating: ""realism" can only occupy in art a dialectical position – it is more a reaction than a truth" (48-9). According to Bazin, realism can only survive and serve a purpose if it becomes a tool for propaganda, inevitably linking the film narrative to actual – and contemporary to the film – social events, in the vein of De Sica's *Bicycle Thief* (in which the simple storyline of a stolen bicycle becomes the token of a wider discourse on unemployment and poverty in postwar Italy). Bazin concludes:

> De Sica's supreme achievement, which others have so far only approached with a varying degree of success and failure, is to have succeeded in discovering the cinematographic dialectic capable of transcending the contradiction between the action of a "spectacle" and of an event. For this reason, *Ladri di Biciclette* is one of the first examples of pure cinema. No more actors, no more story, no more sets,

> which is to say that in the perfect aesthetic illusion of reality there is no more cinema. (60)

Both *banlieue* cinema and the contemporary French Cinema of the Other are aligned on Bazin's delineation of the characteristics of a neo-realistic film. As seen earlier in this chapter with Carrie Tarr's *Reframing Difference: Beur and Banlieue Filmmaking in France*, *banlieue* cinema appeared at a time when immigration from the former African colonies, the construction of HLM buildings, and violence in the *Cités* peaked in France, confirming the inevitable presence of the Other in France. *Banlieue* film was reactionary, an unbiased glimpse into the lives of those HLM and *cité* inhabitants. Today the Cinema of the Other as exemplified with young filmmakers Géraldine Nakache and film choral aficionado Djinn Carrénard is expanding beyond the counter-critique of the Other in France, reaching to a larger notion of urban ideology and reflecting the evolution in fluidity of socio-cultural and ethnic spaces in France both physically and in the text. In the case of *banlieue* and Other filmmakers, it would however be too broad of a statement to say they have achieved "pure cinema," or that "there is no more cinema." In Denis, Nakache, Carrénard, or Kechiche's socio-cultural and ethnic narratives, there is still a screenwriter, a producer, a *metteur-en-scène*, a "shower." In this sense, the irrevocable line that separates the spectacle from the spectator still exists, even though it has been, as this chapter has shown, attenuated.

Conclusion

This dissertation sought to reveal a pattern of resistance in contemporary literary and film depictions of the Metropolitan urban Other, one that privileges expressions of mobility and fluidity in relation to gender and sociocultural norms. I have shown in this work that such instances of shifting identities have surfaced against the fixed image of Otherness displayed in institutionalized French media, such as the museum or the traditional French literature realm. The introductory chapter delineated the four main axes along which the research for this dissertation was conducted: the commodification of art in postcolonial France, the concept of fixity in official media regarding the representation of the Other, Edouard Glissant's notion of *identité-relation* in relation to Fatima El-Tayeb's *postethnicity*, and finally Jacques Rancière's redefinition of the Debordian spectacle.

Manifestations of resistance against institutional fixity regarding the notions of race, ethnicity, and gender roles were framed within three sets of archives pertaining to the fields of museology, literature, and cinema. Chapter I first demonstrated resistance in the arts with French-Tunisian director Abdellatif Kechiche's film rendition of the life of Sarah Baartman, *Vénus Noire*, which set out to rehabilitate the former South African slave while denunciating the continuing artistic objectification of Others in France. Chapter I then revealed the continuing commodification of the Other's image at the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, the controversial national museum of immigration that opened in the former Musée des Colonies during Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency in 2007. The displays of the *Repères* exhibit within the CNHI continue to broadcast ahistorical gender and racial stereotypes concerning the Other, and in so doing, echo the colonial imagery and propaganda that were showcased at the 1931 Exposition Coloniale.

In Chapter II, the commodification of the Other woman's image was studied in relation to postcolonial female literature, from the groundbreaking works of Negritude founders Paulette and Jane Nardal to the novels of contemporary authors Nora Hamdi and Nina Bouraoui. This chapter revealed a strategic institutionalization process of contemporary Metropolitan authors via the paratext of their oeuvres. Through my study of a gendered and ethnically marked paratext, this chapter highlighted that literary institutions in France (the Académie Française, the juries that award prestigious literary prizes, the publishing realm) have benefited from typecasting an-Other literature in order to confirm their superior position. I eventually termed this process "semi-institutionalization." Through the use of neutral and/or Westernized paratexts, authors Nina Bouraoui and Nora Hamdi have been able to reach larger audiences while still conforming to the republican ideal of an-Other literature. This semi-institutionalization process thus allows for the broadcasting of their narratives of postcolonial urban Otherness and their advocating for the fluidity of gender norms, gender roles, ethnicity and national identity in the Metropole.

In Chapter III, I explored the concepts of movement and rhizomatic identities in what I have termed the Cinema of the Other, particularly in the films of Claire Denis, Michael Haneke and Djinn Carrénard. Working from the first expressions of resistance developed in *banlieue* cinema, I have shown that these filmmakers posit alternative patterns of mobility for the Other within the Metropolitan urban sphere. In contrast with the immobile narratives that were rendered popular in early *banlieue* filmmaking, Claire Denis' *J'ai pas sommeil* and *35 Rhums* exhibit mobility as an intrinsic property of her posturban characters' identity, on par with their use of Parisian means of transportation. In the *film choral* genre, Haneke (*Code Inconnu*) and Carrénard (*Donoma*) depict the reality of individual crossing narratives as concrete

manifestations of *identité-relation* in twenty-first century France through deconstructed film techniques.

Due to time constraints, this dissertation has left certain approaches unexplored. This conclusion investigates five directions in which this research will be expanded in the coming years by reflecting on its main theme in relation to additional sources.

1) Media Control and Democracy

In introducing the institutionalization of the arts in France, this work has not considered Noam Chomsky's analysis of the governmental use of public media in the modern Western world. In *Media Control: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*, Noam Chomsky proposes: "The role of the media in contemporary politics forces us to ask what kind of a world and what kind of a society we want to live in, and in particular in what sense of democracy do we want this to be a democratic society?" (9). In the introduction and in Chapter I of this dissertation, I have shown that colonial and postcolonial museums have been and are still utilized as means of propaganda to convey an imperialist image of the French identity. Additionally, in regards to Chomsky's question, this dissertation ultimately demonstrated that fixed representations of Otherness in official media such as the museum have contributed to the creation of an unequivocal gap that has culturally been tearing France apart since the end of colonialism and the beginning of mass influxes of immigration from the former colonies after the Second World War.

This gap functions according to discursive opposites with on one hand, an official discourse regarding immigration that heavily relies on colonial imagery, and on the other hand, artistic expressions of resistance against a predetermined representation of Otherness in France

based on fixed notions of race, ethnicity and gender. Noam Chomsky expresses this concept in terms of two different types of democracy that are, as I have shown, visible in France today:

> One conception of democracy has it that a democratic society is one in which the public has the means to participate in some meaningful way in the management of their own affairs and the means of information are open and free …An alternative conception of democracy is that the public must be barred from managing of their own affairs and the means of information must be kept narrowly and rigidly controlled. That may sound like an odd conception of democracy, but it's important to understand that it is the prevailing conception. (10)

The research of this dissertation has demonstrated that Metropolitan France, as studied from the early nineteenth century to the present day, corresponds to the "prevailing" type of democracy mentioned here by Chomsky, one where information is controlled in order to keep its citizens in an exclusive spectatorial position. Chomsky has termed this type of society a "spectator democracy" where politics use the media to intrude in the lives of citizens in order to "manufacture consent" (14).[148]

According to Chomsky, the majority of the population in a spectator democracy is provided with the minimum of information, this information being at best semi-accurate. In fact, as long as there is an absence of dissidence and power struggle from the "herd," the state can continue to use public media – in the form of Althusserian Ideological State Apparatuses – in order to showcase a homogenous view of history, one that has little to do with reality and that only benefits the few who are in power.[149] Chomsky further accentuates the implausibility of a lack of dissidence in a contemporary democracy, and defines the inevitable uprisings of certain groups as the first signs of failure of the spectator democracy:

> These are all signs of the civilizing effect, despite all the propaganda, despite all the efforts to control thought and manufacture consent. Nevertheless, people are acquiring an ability and a willingness to think things through. Skepticism about power has grown, and attitudes have changed upon many, many issues…Organization has its effects. It means that you discover that you're not alone. Others have the same thoughts that you do. (39-40)

In contemporary France, this form of "organization" against the spectator democracy and the manufacture of consent Chomsky covers in *Media Control* is visible in the domain of the arts. Chomsky's argument here resonates with Edouard Glissant and Patrick Chamoiseau's call to arms in *Les Murs* against the broadcasting of an official, monolithic image of the Other. Both Martiniquan thinkers have underlined the undeniable existence and force of the *Tout-Monde* against the reinforcement of a nationalistic French ideology in the twenty-first century.[150] In the manner of Glissant and Chamoiseau protesting the opening of the Ministry of Immigration in 2007, an increasing number of artists have risen against their exclusive spectator status, and are reclaiming agency in their publishing and broadcasting of the image of a fluid, resilient Other.

In *Media Control*, Noam Chomsky proceeds to outline the benefits and continuing effects of every instance of resistance against media control. To prove his point, the philosopher takes the American Cultural Revolution of the late 1960s as an example of dissent that institutions were unable to assuage, and whose outcomes impacted the next several decades.[151] Similarly, this dissertation has considered the Surrealists' manifestos and their counter-exhibit to the 1931 Exposition Coloniale as precursors to contemporary expressions of resistance against a predefined Other identity. In retrospect, this research needs to consider additional information regarding manifestations of anti-colonialist and anti-racist ideals in the arts over the years and, conversely, official attempts at reinforcing a nationalistic ideology in an effort to control this resistance. Chapter I has highlighted Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency (2007-2012) as an era that was marked by a strong resurgence in colonial ideals, following Jacques Chirac's twelve-year mandate during which immigration and the *banlieue* had both become associated with the term *crisis*. The forthcoming years of socialist François Hollande's presidency will have to be considered in further research. Hollande has already altered the nationalistic ideal set by his

predecessors in legalizing homosexual marriage in France, thus creating a nationwide debate on gender norms and their role in relation to the French identity. The future actions taken by his government will provide insightful material on the shifting nature of democracy in France, and whether or not it will remain attached to its "prevailing" and controlling nature as supported by Chomsky.

2) Sarah Baartman and Josephine Baker

This dissertation has failed to draw a comparison between the life and stage presence of Sarah Baartman and Josephine Baker, and their role in the formation of the French colonial unconscious. Both women were placed on several stages to perform and embody colonial characters intended to comfort the French audience in their conception of the female Other. As seen in Chapter I, Baartman was shown as a wild animal, an inferior being as well as a hypersexualized woman with artistic and entertaining abilities in the French salons – all of this at a time of cultural reinforcement of imperial values (notably through colonial exhibitions and the participation of natives in human zoos). During the interwar period, American-born jazz singer and comedienne Josephine Baker – nicknamed the Bronze Venus – became extremely popular for her caricature representations of Blackness in Paris. She starred in *La Revue Nègre* in 1925 where she was used on stage as a signifier of exoticism, as Ean Wood explains in *The Josephine Baker Story*: "Paris' idea of blacks was basically that of Africans, of wild, primitive, sexy jungle dancing" (79). A few years later, Baker starred in *La Folie Du Jour*, where she appeared in a banana-skirt before ending the show in a more civilized version of her jungle costume.[152] She was also portrayed in a series of lithographs by Paul Colin rendered famous in his collection published under the title *Le Tumulte Noir* ("The Black Craze" 1927).

Josephine Baker performed in film, notably in the 1934 feature *Zouzou*, directed by Marc Allégret. In *Zouzou*, Baker incarnates a young woman who was shown as a child in a circus for her peculiar skin color alongside her adoptive brother, French boy Jean. As an adult, Zouzou is shown performing on stage as a stereotypically exotic figure (much like Baker's real-life cabaret performances) while longing for Jean's love and affection.[153] At a time of uncertainty regarding a possible Second World War, Zouzou's somewhat incestuous and ultimately impossible love for Jean (he is in love with a French woman named Claire) served to reassure French audiences in their supremacy regarding the Other. At the same time, the omnipresence of Baker on screen prefigured the Other's arrival from the colonies to the Metropole, as explained by Elizabeth Ezra in *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France*: "In *Zouzou*, the colonial comes home, in a sort of return of the repressed that prefigures postwar immigration (and repeats images that the French would remember from the colonial exposition of 1931 and would see again at the 1937 World's Fair)" (102).

While *Zouzou* does not exactly pertain to the category of colonial cinema, it nevertheless reinforced stereotypes regarding the racial inferiority and sexual difference of the female Other. In his article "The Cinema as Zoo-keeper," Eric Deroo retraces the creation and advancement of film in relation to Otherness. As imperial discourses on colonization increased in Europe, cinema began to be used as a means of propaganda, moving from the filming of subjects in human zoos to on-site narratives of Otherness.[154] Deroo underlines colonial cinema's systematic production of immutability in its representations of the colonized as a "natural" actor, an "overgrown child" of whom anything could be demanded and for whom the filmmaker – in the same way as the colonizer – appeared as a god-like, civilizing liberator.[155] Colonial cinema, based on the misconception of the Other as a puppet in the filmmaker's hands, bore traces well into twentieth

century film productions. Fixed in time (the colonial era) and space (the colonies) at the onset of cinematography, any sort of displacement of this dialectic was bound to serve a similar type of ideological purpose.

Beyond the image of the colonial, Josephine Baker, through her presence on screen and on various types of prints, popularized the image of the flapper, *la garçonne*, and became a symbol of feminist and sexual liberation (Wood 110). In *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France*, Elizabeth Ezra notes: "Baker was so popular … precisely because she was so hard to place; a floating signifier of cultural difference, she represented many different things to different people… she could evoke Africa, the Caribbean, the United States, and France, by turns or all at once as the occasion required" (99). Josephine Baker starred in several films including *Zouzou* (1934) and *Princesse Tam-Tam* (1935). Her stage and cinematographic productions all included singing and dancing, a key element that has been reappropriated by contemporary filmmaker Abdellatif Kechiche in his denunciation of stereotyped Otherness.

3) The Other, the Gaze and Photography

The question of the gaze in *Vénus Noire* in relation to the Other's image was approached in Chapter I, yet it was exclusively concerned with the spectators watching Sarah Baartman in her various spectacles, before and after her death. In fact, little has been said in this dissertation on the effect of broadcasting a fixed image of the Other in regard to the reception of this image by the Other him/herself. This process was explored by Frantz Fanon in *Peau noire, masques blancs* at the time of the Negritude movement. In 1952, Fanon outlined the expectations linked to his condition as a Black man and how he encountered them upon his arrival in the Metropole: "J'arrive lentement dans le monde, habitué à ne plus prétendre au surgissement. Je m'achemine

par reptation. Déjà les regards blancs, les seuls vrais, me dissèquent. Je suis *fixé* … Je sens, je vois dans ces regards blancs que ce n'est pas un nouvel homme qui entre, mais un nouveau type d'homme, un nouveau genre. Un nègre, quoi!" (93).[156] Here the French adjective "fixé" carries a double meaning. While "fixé" literally means "fixed," it also means "gazed at" as in "fixer du regard." For Fanon, the white gaze, as it was casted upon him, irremediably affected the image he had of himself and forced him to redefine his identity against the white norm.[157] Fanon's concept of an identity irrevocably rebuilt according to the colonizer/ colonized dialectic is applicable to the case of Sarah Baartman only in the sense that her perception of herself was altered when she became an object of spectacle for the gaze of Others in European salons.[158]

In becoming an object of the gaze in the Metropole, Baartman understood her role in the dialectic of the spectacle of the Other as a means to break free from slavery. Abdellatif Kechiche has mentioned in several interviews the double bind in which Baartman found herself in her relationship with her Dutch master Caezar and her condition. In *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects*, Christina Sharpe explains that had she been liberated from Caezar's ownership, Baartman would have been sent back to South Africa, where she most likely would have been enslaved once more.[159] In an interview with *L'Express*, Kechiche confirms: "On peut se poser la question. Pour quelles raisons ne se révolte-t-elle pas? Sans être contrainte de jouer ce spectacle, elle n'est pas non plus libre de décider. C'est peut-être un moindre mal. Restée en Afrique du Sud, elle aurait été esclave chez des gens qui l'auraient traitée encore plus mal. Elle pouvait penser pouvoir un jour reconquérir ici sa propre image, jouer du violon et être l'artiste qu'elle rêvait d'être. " [160] As this project expands, the study of Sarah Baartman in Chapter I (as it echoes literary and film representations of Otherness developed in Chapters II and III) will

benefit from additional research regarding the status of the Other as a subject – instead of being considered solely an object – of the colonial spectacle.

The role of photography as one of the primordial arts to be considered in the colonial spectacle and the resulting fixity of the Other's image was not approached in this dissertation. Sarah Baartman died in 1815, seven years before Nicéphore Niépce invented the first photographic camera. Representations of the Hottentot Venus were therefore limited to statuettes (as seen in Abdellatif Kechiche's film *Vénus Noire*), paintings ordered by Georges Cuvier to serve a scientific interest, and lithographs later produced to propagate and popularize the image of the Other as a freak and a monster. After Sarah Baartman's death, as human zoos and colonial expositions begun to flourish across Europe, photography became a strategic component of colonialist propaganda. Photography had the power to place the Other into the very hands of the public, inducing them with the power to possess their own Other. Elizabeth Edwards in "Photography and the Making of the Other" explains:

> This symbiotic relationship emerged from a common conceptual groundwork of systems of value and exchange. Within it, images flowed between the sites of anthropological and colonial observation, the studies, drawing-rooms and albums of upper- and middle-class Europe and North America, the scholar's study, laboratory and museum in mutually sustaining and overlapping relationships. The making and movement of photographs had a massing effect, cohering around certain kinds of imagery which assumed the force of truth." (239)

This phenomenon relates once again to Chomsky's notion of a "spectator society" and the "manufacture of consent:" to purchase and own one of these photographs was an expression of one's consenting, or rather agreeing to the colonial dialectic of superiority of the white race over any Other race.

In opposition to the colonial imagery displayed in French museums of the Other – the CNHI in particular – Chapter I failed to posit Denis Darzacq's levitation photography as a

contemporary act of resistance against institutionalized fixity. Currently displayed at the CNHI as part of the *Repères* exhibit, Denis Darzacq's work on levitation photography is very much ingrained in the high structures of urban Paris, reinstating the trope of physical movement as starkly contrasting the fixity and rigidity of *banlieue* life. His work on "La Chute" ("The Fall") – a work which is actually comprised of a fair number of photographs even though only a handful are shown at the CNHI – along with his work "Cités" and "Ensembles," is a (picture-) perfect visual interpretation of Michel de Certeau's theories on *le quotidien* and the Situationnists (Guy Debord and Henri Lefebvre)'s notions of *trace* within the urban discourse. If in fact, as Barthes underlined in *La Chambre claire* (see Chapter I), photography is intrinsically linked to the creation and overpowering visual presence of the signifier, levitation photography should therefore be considered as a signifier of mobility in the Other artistic sphere.

Figure 4.1: Denis Darzacq's "Cités" construction within the *Repères* exhibit (CNHI)

Figure 4.2: Denis Darzacq's "La Chute n.1," an example of levitation photography

Darzacq's photography is *en mouvement*, and his subjects are representative of the postethnic population of contemporary Paris. Darzacq's work has been misplaced as part of the disconnected display of artifacts within the *Repères* exhibit and therefore does not initially appear to be disruptive of the nation-building propaganda of the CNHI. Yet, the presence of Darzacq's work in the CNHI eases the museum of immigration's entrance into a wider discourse of contemporary curatorial practices in relation to the postcolonial. In truth, the mere presence of his work indicates that the CNHI as a whole could potentially move beyond the walls of the colonization/ immigration binary and spring into the current debates regarding museology and digital exhibits developed further in this conclusion.

4) Discursive Museums

This dissertation began with a study of the opening of the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration at a time marked by the resurgence of colonial ideology during Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency. In the first chapter, I demonstrated that the CNHI echoed former French president Jacques Chirac's Musée du Quai Branly in its display of colonial art. In fact, both museums are presidential creations and both were intended to act as sites of national memory, albeit a memory directed by colonial pride and molded by the institutions in order to display a slightly distorted image of France's colonial past to the wider public. Museums as sites of memory can be constructed and altered depending on whose work is involved in curating their exhibits. I have shown in Chapter I that the mission of the CNHI (to educate the crowds on the history of French immigration) can never be achieved because the Cité's essence is to fixate a sociocultural phenomenon that is currently happening outside the walls of the museum. This dissertation has demonstrated that in countering the fixity of identities displayed in the CNHI and the ahistorical representations of Others in France that derive from the museum itself, contemporary artists have created and developed alternative sites of memory and identity in the realms of literature and cinema.

In *Imagined Museums: Art and Modernity in Postcolonial Morocco*, Katarzyna Pieprzak argues that contemporary Moroccan artists have consolidated the lack of adequate museums in their country by creating a discursive space in journals and newspapers in which they were able to discuss the type of museum they would like to see built, as representative of their history and their future.[161] Piprzak explains her theory:

> I argue that in *writing* and *speaking* about modern art in Morocco through their discursive museum, Moroccan artists suspended and repositioned the monumentality of dominant discourses both in the West and in Morocco, discourses about such things as Orientalism, Islam, universalism, local

> nationalism, and neobourgeois materialism. Artists performed this relocation not merely to dismiss or mock the contents of such discourses but rather to diminish the authority of dominant discourses by inscribing their own narratives. (93)

The concept of a "discursive museum" following the lines of Pieprzak's argument can be applied to the Surrealists' counter-exhibit *La Vérité sur les colonies* (*Truth about the Colonies*) in response to the extravagant 1931 Exposition Coloniale, along with their manifestos "Ne visitez pas l'Exposition Coloniale" ("Do Not Visit the Colonial Exposition") and "Premier bilan de l'Exposition Coloniale" ("First Toll of the Colonial Exhibition"). This notion of a discursive museum took on a postethnic turn in 2007 when Edouard Glissant and Patrick Chamoiseau's published *Les Murs: l'identité nationale hors-la-loi?* (*Raze the Walls: A Case for Outlawing Nationalim*), in which they questioned the institutional need for the concurrent opening of a Ministry and a Museum of Immigration in France at a time of social upheaval and governmental sanctioning of the very existence of Otherness in the *banlieue*.

The resistance of the Moroccan artists mentioned in Pieprzak's study against the fixed institution of the museum is comparable to that of contemporary Other artists in France such as Bouraoui, Nakache, or Carrénard. Through the creation of "discursive museums" as sites of memory in the realms of literature and cinema, these artists of resistance have formed narratives with several goals: to overcome France's colonial past, to display a more accurate perception of contemporary Paris, and to prefigure a (near) future where Others are recognized by the institutions as fluid and migratory beings whose travel patterns intersect to create large networks of transnational identities. A concrete example of this pattern is developed in Chapter I in the study of Abdellatif Kechiche's *Vénus Noire*. In his 2010 feature, Kechiche strove to rehabilitate the South African woman through a restaging of her own performances under the direction of her masters Caezar and Réaux. Kechiche's research on Sarah Baartman's story combined with his

personal background as an immigrant filmmaker turned the French-Tunisian film director into a postethnic curator. With *Vénus Noire*, Kechiche masterly created a discursive museum on screen, in response to the Musée de l'Homme display that fixated Baartman in terms of physical abnormality and racial inferiority. The notion of artistic sites of memory as discursive museums will therefore be implemented in further research regarding this dissertation's thematic.

5) Museums of Immigration, Itinerant Exhibitions, and the Digital Age

Discursive museums and itinerant exhibits have in common a certain immateriality that has the capacity to break through the physical walls of the museum and the fixed republican ideals of the institutions. Pieprzak explores itinerant exhibits in Morocco in her chapter entitled "Taking Art to the Streets: The Ephemeral Outdoor Museum as Contact Zone." For Pieprzak, outdoors/ street celebrations are occasions for the public to redefine their personal conception of art, history and nationalism, as part of a discursive museum narrative:

> Art festivals are one form of what I call the ephemeral outdoor museum. Flexible in its identity, the ephemeral outdoor museum can do many things judged impossible in the confines of a physical museum. A mobile site and temporary site, it has the promise of serendipitous interaction with heterogeneous publics and dislodged the idea that culture is an object to be located in a central static and symbolic temple. (130)

Art festivals in France – such as the annual Festival d'Avignon, based on street theater performances – are occasions for the wider public to access various art forms beyond the strict walls of the museum or the theatre. In the case of a national museum of immigration, outdoor or itinerant exhibits would be the ideal venue to not only reflect on the intrinsic itinerant quality of migrants, but also to gather a network of narratives through contact with a wider audience, outside of the museum.

Chapter I of this dissertation has not considered the impact and growing accessibility of digital exhibitions. In England, the Migration Museum Project led by former Minister of Immigration Barbara Roche aims at creating a mobile exhibit that will tour all around England. The project results from collaboration between Roche and a group of experienced professionals from immigration, human rights, museum, literary, and artistic backgrounds. They first established themselves as a charity, began their work by building a website and holding a few public events, and are currently looking for funding in order to engage communities and have them tell their stories and build their museum of immigration.[162] The exhibit will thus be ever-expanding and never anchored in one particular place. It is designed to be a traveling exhibit, echoing the very essence of migration: "The Migration Museum will have a physical space, most likely built out of shipping containers: funky, adaptable, expandable, portable and cheap – and with a migration resonance all of their own. And our museum will be mobile, literally taking the tale of migration round the country and building the story as it goes."[163]

The Migration Museum project exists principally online. Its website provides visitors with easy navigation and access to historical facts and online photos of the artifacts that will be part of the itinerant exhibit. Digital exhibitions are becoming more common in the twenty-first century. The CNHI's *Repères* exhibit is viewable online and is accompanied by short films relating the history of immigration from the late 1800s to the early 2000s. However, cautious curatorial techniques need to be in place in order to preempt the resurfacing of colonial discourses in digital displays regarding the Other. For example, Montréal's Musée des Beaux-Arts offers access to native and indigenous artifacts from all over the world through its online exhibit entitled "Archéologie et Cultures du Monde".[164] While accessing the art collection is easy, the artifacts are nonetheless displayed in random order on the page. Each photo indicates

the country of origin of the artifact, and the page can be displayed according to "vedettes" ("popular"), "date de production" or "date d'acquisition." This type of exhibit, which privileges the colonizer's right to possess rather than the original artist's authorship and agency, is extremely similar to the native art display at Jacques Chirac's Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, as seen in Chapter I.

Can the CNHI turn its permanent exhibit *Repères* into an itinerant exhibit, following the model of the aforementioned British Migration Museum, or should we consider its online presence a sufficient tool in the creation of a discursive museum, outside the walls of the former Musée des Colonies? At the CNHI, there is a dichotomy between old media and new media: the old media as manifested in the physical exhibit inside the museum and in the new media found on the museum's website (Figure 4.4). The Cité's website offers a variety of information, ranging from events (musical, literary events, colloquiums, literary prizes ceremonies…) to archives of immigration (films and photographs, some of them duplicates of what is inside the museum) and other resources which are aimed at educating the online visitor on the history of immigration in France. This active online presence positively reinforces the existence of a discursive museum outside the heavy colonial discourse inscribed on the walls of the Palais de la Porte Dorée.

Notes

[1] "Diversity, which is neither chaos nor sterility, means the human spirit's striving for a cross-cultural relationship, without universalist transcendence. Diversity needs the presence of peoples, no longer as objects to be swallowed up, but with the intention of creating a new relationship. Sameness requires fixed Being, Diversity establishes Becoming …
Sameness is sublimated difference; Diversity is accepted difference." (190, Dash 98)
[2] *Les Murs* was published in the French newspaper *L'Humanité* on September 4, 2007 as an abstract of a longer version of the manifesto entitled *Quand les murs tombent: l'identité nationale hors-la-loi?* (Paris: Galaade Editions, 2007)
[3] "In 1810, the Hottentot Venus established a particular pattern in the process of coming to know the Other. Put on a show for her 'exoticism,' she would attract both scientists and the general public. While the former studied her, the latter came to 'view' her. They observed her with different attitudes (enjoyment, curiosity, knowledge), but she was always seen as a 'curious animal,' representing a continent and a race." (Boëtsch and Blanchard 63)
[4] Kechiche stated in a 2010 interview: "Ce qui m'a le plus impressionné dans le destin de Saartjie, c'est ce qui va au-delà de l'Histoire. Son histoire traverse le temps et reste très actuelle. Ce qui se joue au niveau du regard de l'autre se manifeste dans la société du spectacle telle que nous la vivons aujourd'hui. Politiquement, nous vivons une décennie qui marque le retour d'un certain racisme, de comportements de plus en plus méprisants envers l'autre." ("What astonished me the most in Saartjie's story is what transcends history. Her story crosses time and remains very contemporary. The play on the other's gaze is present in the society of spectacle we live in. Politically, the decade we live in is tainted by a return to a certain kind of racism and increasingly spiteful behavior towards the other" Tonet, 6)
[5] "What is common is 'sensation'. Human beings are tied together by a certain sensory fabric, a certain distribution of the sensible, which defines their way of being together; and politics about the transformation of the sensory fabric of 'being together'. It seems as if the paradox of the 'apart together' has been dispelled. The solitude of the artwork is a false solitude: it is an intertwining or twisting together of sensations, like the cry of a human body. And a human collective is an intertwining and twisting together of sensations in the same way." (Rancière 56)
[6] Kristin Ross explains in *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*: "Once modernization has run its course, then one is, quite simply, either French or not, modern or not: exclusion becomes racial or national in nature. If the ideology of modernization says convergence – all societies will look the same – what it in fact sustains and freezes into place is the very unevenness or inequality that it was supposed to overcome: they will never be like us, they will never catch up. In today's Paris that frozen temporal lag appears as a spatial configuration: the white, upper-class city *intra muros*, surrounded by islands of migrant communities a long RER ride away." (12)
[7] " What are the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs)? They must not be confused with the (repressive) State apparatus. Remember that in Marxist theory, the State Apparatus (SA) contains: the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc., which constitute what I shall in future call the Repressive State Apparatus. Repressive suggests that the State Apparatus in question 'functions by violence' – at least ultimately (since repression, e.g. administrative repression, may take non-physical forms). I shall call Ideological State Apparatuses a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions. I propose an empirical list of these which will obviously have to be examined in detail, tested, corrected and re-organized. With all

the reservations implied by this requirement, we can for the moment regard the following institutions as Ideological State Apparatuses (the order in which I have listed them has no particular significance):

- the religious ISA (the system of the different churches),
- the educational ISA (the system of the different public and private 'schools'),
- the family ISA,
- the legal ISA,
- the political ISA (the political system, including the different parties),
- the trade-union ISA,
- the communications ISA (press, radio and television, etc.), the cultural ISA (literature, the arts, sports, etc.)." (Althusser 142-3)

[8] " … la Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration a pour missions de faire connaître à un public le plus large possible deux siècles d'histoire de l'immigration en France et de contribuer ainsi à faire changer les regards et les mentalités sur l'immigration." (Murphy 62)

[9] Ross explains: "If the consolidation of a broad middle class more or less transpires during these years, it is also during these years that France distances itself from its (former) colonies, both within and without: this is the moment of the great cordonning off of the immigrants, their removal to the suburbs in a massive reworking of the social boundaries of Paris and the other large French cities." (11)

[10] "On June 20, 2005, then Minister of the Interior Sarkozy had visited the Cité des 4000 housing project outside of Paris (in La Courneuve) claiming he would "clean it with a high-pressure hose" (nettoyer au Kärcher). Later, during a visit to the Argenteuil *banlieue* on October 25, 2005, he promised one resident he would rid the project of its "scum/rabble" (racaille)." (Thomas 62-3)

[11] Caribbean authors Edouard Glissant and Patrick Chamoiseau wrote in their manifesto, *Les Murs*, in reaction to the creation of the Ministry: "Une des richesses les plus fragiles de l'identité, personnelle ou collective, et les plus précieuses aussi, est que d'évidence elle se développe et se renforce de manière continue, nulle part on ne rencontre de fixité identitaire, mais aussi qu'elle ne saurait s'établir ni se rassurer à partir de règles, d'édits, de lois qui en fonderaient d'autorité la nature" ("One of the most fragile aspects of personal and collective identity, and one of the most precious as well, is that without doubt it continuously develops and reinforces itself: identity can't be fixed; also it cannot be established or reinforced by rules, edicts or laws that would establish its nature.")

[12] Thomas explains: "After all, one of the stated goals of [Minister of Immigration Eric Besson]'s ministry was to "Promouvoir notre identité" (Promote our identity). In reality, though, the debate served to confirm the disconnect between the French authorities and the sociocultural realities of French society today." (75)

[13] "Agents agressifs de la Relation, les peuples européens ne pouvaient en concevoir la poétique, qui leur semblait faiblesse et renoncement" ("European peoples, while being aggressive concerning the cross-cultural process, could not understand its poetics, which to them represented weakness and surrender." 247, 136)

[14] "If we speak of creolized cultures (like Caribbean culture, for example) it is not to define a category that will by its very nature be opposed to other categories ("pure" cultures), but in order to assert that today infinite varieties of creolization are open to human conception, both on the level of awareness and on that of intention: in theory and in reality." (140)

[15] "Principes de connexion et d'hétérogénéité: n'importe quel point d'un rhizome peut être connecté avec n'importe quelle autre, et doit l'être. C'est très différent de l'arbre ou de la racine qui fixent un point, un ordre" ("Principles of connection and heterogeneity : any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order"18, Massumi 7). "Le rhizome est une antigénéalogie … Le rhizome procède par variation, expansion … le rhizome se rapporte à une carte qui doit être produite, construite, toujours démontable, connectable, renversable, modifiable, à entrées et sorties multiples, avec ses lignes de fuite" ("The rhizome is an antigenealogy… The rhizome operates by variation, expansion … the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight." 62, 21)
[16] "Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari criticized notions of the root and, even perhaps, notions of being rooted… In opposition to this they propose the rhizome, an enmeshed root system, a network spreading either in the ground or in the air, with no predatory rootstock taking over permanently. The notion of the rhizome maintains, therefore, the idea of rootedness but challenges that of a totalitarian root. Rhizomatic thought is the principle behind what I call the Poetics of Relation, in which each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other." (11)
[17] "The idea of a unique root identity gives a standard: in its name these communities were enslaved by others, and in its name numerous others fought for their freedom. But to the unique root, the one that kills all around itself, shouldn't we subsequently propose the rhizomatic root, one that opens Relation? It is not unearthed: but it also does not encroach on its surroundings."
[18] "Debates about the state of Europe emphasize that essential to the success of the continental union beyond mere economic and bureaucratic centralization is a sense of transnational European identity, based on common values, rooted in a common past, distinguishing the continent from the rest of the world and connecting nations with vastly different cultures." (2)
[19] I here consider the term "postethnicity" as refering to a set of characteristics that compose the contemporary Other's identity. These characteristics are no longer exclusively based on the sole concept of one's ethnicity, but rather on the multiple notions of social class, relation to the urban space, familial relations, gender identity, sexual identity... as explained in this dissertation. I do not consider the prefix "post" to mean that "ethnicity" no longer exists; rather, I consider "post" to echo the developing aspect of the neo-urban identity phenomenon in contemporary France.
[20] "My notion of queer … is one that references positionalities placed in opposition to as well as opposing heteronormative models of white European masculinity" (El-Tayeb 7)
[21] "Those of us who stand outside the circle of this society's definition of acceptable women; those of us who have been forged in the crucibles of difference -- those of us who are poor, who are lesbians, who are Black, who are older -- know that survival is not an academic skill. It is learning how to take our differences to make them strengths. *For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house*. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master's house as their only source of support." (Lorde 112)
[22] "In the case of France…it means considering the various ways in which the practice of colonialism has outlived its history. With the waning of its empire, France turned to a form of interior colonialism; rational administrative techniques developed in the colonies were brought

home and put to use side by side with new technological innovations such as advertising in reordering metropolitan, domestic society, the "everyday life" of its citizens." (Ross 7)

[23] Carrie Tarr in her comprehensive study of banlieue cinema, *Reframing Difference: Beur and Banlieue Filmmaking in France* (2005), outlines the dichotomy between mainstream French cinema and "other" cinema as revealing of political implications regarding the suppression or affirmation of a neo urban ethnic identity: "As I have argued elsewhere, dominant French cinema has, until relatively recently, tended to suppress or marginalize the voices and narratives of the nation's troubling postcolonial others and (re)produce ethnic hierarchies founded on the assumed supremacy of white metropolitan culture and identity (Tarr 1997). Arguably, then, films by and about the *beurs* offer a touchstone for measuring the extent to which universalists Republican assumptions about Frenchness can be challenged in particular forms of multiculturalism envisaged and valued" (3).

[24] In *Phantasmatic Indochina: French Colonial Ideology in Architecture, Film, and Literature* notes: "The anticolonial fair wants to tell a different story but, in the end, it seems unable to imagine other ways of representing colonized cultures and peoples. Ultimately, it wants to educate the masses by entertaining them and providing them with readily digestible material. Thus, it follows the didactic strategies used by organizers of the Exposition Coloniale, even though La Vérité sur les Colonies presents the obverse side of colonization." (62)

[25] In 2006, French-Congolese author Alain Mabanckou was awarded the Prix Renaudot for *Mémoires de porc-épic*, French-American author Jonathan Littell's *Les Bienveillantes* received the Grand Prix du Roman de l'Académie Française and French-Canadian Nancy Huston received the Prix Fémina for *Lignes de faille*.

[26] "Le centre jusqu'ici, même si de moins en moins, avait eu cette capacité d'absorption qui contraignait les auteurs venus d'ailleurs à se dépouiller de leurs bagages avant de se fondre dans le creuset de la langue et de son histoire nationale: le centre, nous disent les prix d'automne, est désormais partout, aux quatre coins du monde. Fin de la francophonie. Et naissance d'une littérature-monde en français… Soyons clairs : l'émergence d'une littérature-monde en langue française consciemment affirmée, ouverte sur le monde, transnationale, signe l'acte de décès de la francophonie. Personne ne parle le francophone, ni n'écrit en francophone. La francophonie est de la lumière d'étoile morte. Comment le monde pourrait-il se sentir concerné par la langue d'un pays virtuel ? Or c'est le monde qui s'est invité aux banquets des prix d'automne. A quoi nous comprenons que les temps sont prêts pour cette révolution" ("Until here, the center had shown, although decreasingly, this capacity of absorption that constrained foreign authors to abandon their baggage before melding into the melting pot of language and its national history: the center, according to this autumn's literary prizes, is now everywhere, all around the world. The end of *francophonie*. The birth of a world-literature in French… Let's be clear: the emergence of a world-literature in the French language that is consciously affirmed, that opens onto the world, that is transnational, that signs the obituary of *francophonie*. No one neither speaks Francophone, nor writes in the Francophone language. *Francophonie* is the light of a dying star. How could the world feel concerned with the language of a virtual country? Yet it is the world that invited itself to the banquet of autumn prizes. We thus understand that the time is right for this revolution.")

[27] "In the indeterminate context of the French-speaking communities we lump together as *La francophonie*, it was, therefore, an apparently simple notion to regard the French language as the a priori bearer of values that could help remedy the anarchist tendencies of the various cultures that are, completely or partially, a product of its expression." (112)

[28] "The radiance of oral literatures thus came to change writing's order instead of replacing it. Writing is truly saying: to spread oneself before the world without becoming scattered or diluted, and without worrying to use these powers of orality that suit the diversity of all things: repeating, reiterating, the circular word, the spiraling cry, the breaking voice. "
[29] "One of the key factors contributing to Jean-Marie Le Pen's success in the first round of the 2002 presidential elections was the feeling of insecurity generated by persistent negative media images of so-called illegal immigrants and disorder in the *banlieue*… However, although Le Pen was defeated by Jacques Chirac in the second round of the presidential elections, policies introduced by interior minister Nicolas Sarkozy under the rightwing government led by Jean-Pierre Raffarin look set to apply heavy-handed police measures to the *banlieue* rather than addressing the many underlying socio-economic causes of unrest… In this context, the question is whether, and in what ways, *beur*-authored films are able to challenge dominant discourses on ethnicity and citizenship and construct alternative spaces of cross-cultural understanding and awareness" (Tarr 167-8).
[30] <http://www.lacid.org>
[31] *Donoma* won the Prix Louis-Delluc du Premier Film, a prize awarded for a first movie (Abeur-Zaimeche was a recipient in 2001). The Prix Louis-Delluc itself is a prestigious prize started in 1937 and awarded to, among others, Jean Renoir, Jean Cocteau, Louis Malle, and François Truffaut.
[32] The Musée de l'Homme where Baartman's remains were exhibited is currently closed and set to reopen in 2015.
[33] "Trapped as they [historians] are by the wrong paradigm which reflects only fragmentary shards of the One Nation, none of them could hope to say anything significant about a national identity that runs from the Gauls to the government of President Nicolas Sarkozy. Even less are they able to tell their fellow citizens about the very soul of the nation which underpins this long and unbroken story." (Lebovics 2011)
[34] "We don't have the wherewithal to manage a Ministry of Identity." (Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.)
[35] In *Les Murs*, they wrote: "Une des richesses les plus fragiles de l'identité, personnelle ou collective, et les plus précieuses aussi, est que d'évidence elle se développe et se renforce de manière continue, nulle part on ne rencontre de fixité identitaire, mais aussi qu'elle ne saurait s'établir ni se rassurer à partir de règles, d'édits, de lois qui en fonderaient d'autorité la nature" ("One of the most fragile aspects of personal and collective identity, and one of the most precious as well, is that without doubt it continuously develops and reinforces itself: identity can't be fixed; also it cannot be established or reinforced by rules, edicts or laws that would establish its nature." 1)
[36] "Thus protest against French imperialism could serve the more self-interested goal of bolstering the Party … the counter-exposition also became a locus of tensions between the Communist party and surrealist collaborators, the former with the increasing desire to require that artists and writers conform to an officially sanctioned aesthetic, and the latter convinced that surrealism best expressed the notions of continuous revolution espoused by the Communists." (Palermo 32)
[37] "Baartman never entirely disappeared from public consciousness, surviving in a plaster cast on display at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris until 1976 and in occasional snickers in the press …

since then, Baartman has fast become both an academic and a popular icon for black sexuality and its exploitation." (Strother 1)
[38] "They observed her with different attitudes (enjoyment, curiosity, knowledge), but she was always seen as a 'curious animal', representing a continent and a race." (Blanchard and Boëtsch 62)
[39] "Demands to repatriate the remains of Sarah Baartman were initiated by the Griqua National Conference, an organization for Khoikhoi descendants, in 1996. This was done through a petition to the Musée de l'Homme, which was supported by President Nelson Mandela. Baartman's skeletal remains were repatriated to South Africa in 2002, and given a state burial. President Thabo Mbeki declared her grave a national monument." (Rapoo 137-138)
[40] "It is as if the Photograph always carries its referent within himself, both affected by the same amorous or funeral immobility, at the very heart of the moving world: they are glued together, limb by limb, like the condemned man the corpse in certain tortures." (Howard 5-6)
[41] "And the person or thing photographed is the target, the referent, a kind of little simulacrum, any *eidolon* emitted by the object, which I should like to call the *Spectrum* of the Photograph, because this word retains, through its root, a relation to "spectacle" and adds to it that rather terrible thing which is there in every photograph: the return of the dead." (9)
[42] "Conversely, real life is materially invaded by the contemplation of spectacle, and ends up absorbing and aligning itself with it …(r)eality emerges within the spectacle, and the spectacle is real. This reciprocal alienation is the essence and support of the existing society." (Nicholson-Smith 18)
[43] Michel Leiris started a collection of ethnographic works in 1931 that ended in 1967 with the publication of *Afrique Noire*. These works are partly composed of accounts of his own trip between Dakar and Djibouti. His research was meant to help complete the collections at the Musée de l'Homme, at the time Musée d'Ethnographie, at the Trocadéro.
[44] "Saartjie Baartman would, after this, be regularly put on display for scientists to study (beginning with Georges Cuvier, followed by Blainville and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire), but also for artists to observe (Nicolas Huet and Léon de Wailly) so that her anatomical characteristics could be recorded in the most minute detail." (Boëtsch and Blanchard 65)
[45] Edwards confirms: "It was through these processes that, for instance, images were absorbed into anthropology and thus became 'science'. Equally, the way in which science was visualized through photography informed the popular production of photographs of non-European peoples and legitimizes their consumption within an encompassing visual economy" (239).
[46] "Through its scientific agendas, combined with its aspiration to realism, photography promoted a type of image which was saturated by general assumptions about racial and cultural hierarchies, the fear of contamination, political expediency, and which, paradoxically, marked the disappearance of the 'primitive' through which the self could be defined, thereby gaining a political dimension in its support of colonial practices." (Edwards 240)
[47] "I went to see her body cast and there, I felt like I was facing her. She had lived two hundred years earlier and people were talking about her, and there she was, still present among us. It felt like a supernatural tale, a resurrection. I had for her such a strong feeling of brotherhood, and at the same time I was awed, as if facing a sphinx."
[48] "The spectacle is *capital* to such a degree of accumulation that it becomes an image." (Nicholson- Smith 34)

[49] This last part of her life is subject to interpretation, as the circumstances of her death were never proven: "Ce qui s'est passé dans les salons parisiens a été rapporté par un magazine de l'époque, *Journal des dames et des modes,* de façon très précise. Qu'elle se soit prostituée semble avéré, même si l'on n'est pas sûr qu'elle ait exercé au sein d'une maison close" / " What happened in the parisian salons was exposed at the time in the *Journal des dames et des modes* magazine, with accute details. While she undoubtedly prostituted herself, we are unsure whether she actually worked in a brothel" (Tonet 6).
[50] Kechiche's *La Graine et le mulet* features a full-length, fast-paced musical and dancing sequence coupled with images of the protagonist, running to his death. On his adaptation of the scene to Baartman's story, he explains: "Là, je sentais que je pouvais affiner cette idée d'un rythme musical, qui soit entre la rupture et la transe. Pourquoi la transe? Parce qu'elle permet d'aller au-delà de l'interprétation, de devenir Saartjie, à force de la voir s'exhiber, s'humilier, subir les regards … La musique nait du rythme des scènes, des ruptures entre elles" / " In this scene, I knew I could accentuate the idea of a rhythm that would lie between rupture and trance. Why trance? Because it enables us to go beyond interpretation, to become Saartjie, as we watch her display herself, humiliate herself, submit to the gaze… Music emerges from the rhythm of the different scenes, from the ruptures in between these scenes." (Tonet 8)
[51] "But it is in his corporeality that the Negro is attacked. It is as a concrete personality that he is lynched," "To suffer from a phobia of Negroes is to be afraid of the biological. The Negroes are animals. They go about naked," "The Negro is the genital." (163, 165,180)
[52] "For the sexual potency of the Negro is hallucinating … Is the Negro's superiority real? Everyone *knows* that it is not. But that is not what matters. The prelogical thought of the phobic has decided that such is the case." (157, 159)
[53] "Nous sommes avertis, c'est vers la lactification que tend Mayotte. Car enfin il faut blanchir la race: cela, toutes les Martiniquaises le savent, le disent, le répètent. Blanchir la race, sauver la race, mais non dans le sens qu'on pourrait supposer: non pas préserver "l'originalité de la portion du monde au sein duquel elles ont grandi", mais assurer sa blancheur " ("We are thus put on notice that what Mayotte wants is a kind of lactification. For, in a word, the race must be whitened; every woman in Martinique knows this, says it, repeats it. Whiten the race, save the race, but not in the sense that one might think: not "preserve the uniqueness of that part of the world in which they grew up," but make sure that it will be white." 38, 47)
[54] "What astonished me the most in Saartjie's story is what transcends history. Her story crosses time and remains very contemporary. The play on the other's gaze is present in the society of spectacle we live in. Politically, the decade we live in is tainted by a return to a certain kind of racism and increasingly spiteful behavior towards the other."
[55] "The vision of museums as State institutions means that projects initiated by presidential decree operate though a special dynamic within the general structure, enjoying a degree of autonomy that simultaneously facilitates their efficient realization and foments strong divisions between supporters and opponents. It also means that a presidential undertaking focused on the arts of non-French cultures becomes highly charged and pulls other members of the nation's family of museums into the debate." (Price 27)
[56] "The only other offering in the interpretive area was a film projected on a large screen at the front. Expecting to see scenes from some of the geographical/ ethnographic areas featured in the galleries, I was surprised to watch as the camera panned over the library of André Breton, focusing on books, ceramics, masks, and paintings in the artistically cluttered home of this father

of French Surrealism whose collection had provided several of the masterpieces displayed in the exhibition galleries." (Price 62)

[57] "to provide the largest audience with the knowledge of two centuries of immigration in France, and to thus contribute to change the ways immigration is seen and considered."

[58] Amanda Stansell underlines in "Surrealist Racial Politics at Borders of 'Reason': Whiteness, Primitivism and Négritude": "Finally, although this period is often called the 'apogee' of French colonialism, independence movements by indigenous people in Syria, Tunisia, Morocco and Indo-China during the 1920s and 930s threatened to crack the façade of colonialism as a peaceful *mission civilisatrice*. The French government therefore needed to justify colonialist policies and elicit popular support through grand exhibits of colonial 'success', such as the 1931 International Colonial Exposition in Paris at Vincennes." (112)

[59] Morton explains: "The contrast of the sophisticated, urban style of the former and the primitive styles of the latter gave evidence of Europe's civilization and the native's savagery. This was architecture's mission at the Exposition: to make concrete inherent differences between Europe and the colonies and to represent Europe's *mission civilisatrice*." (7)

[60] "The spectacle is the existing order's uninterrupted discourse about itself, its laudatory monologue. It is the self-portrait of power in the epoch of its totalitarian management of the conditions of existence." (Nicholson-Smith 24)

[61] Patricia Morton writes in *Hybrid Modernities*: "The pavilions were, therefore, equivalent to racial 'types' produced by physiognomy. They represented the stereotypical character of a colonized people, as understood by French social science and colonial administration, by means of synthetic architectural signifiers. Architects used various strategies to represent this character. In a few cases, such as the Angkor Pavilion, the colony was depicted by a representative monument that was reconstituted with considerable accuracy of detail and massing." (219)

[62] Morton confirms: "This formula indicates that although Asian and African civilization might be 'celebrated' in these frescoes, they were characterized in such a way as to reinforce their evolutionary retardation." (304)

[63] The Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration opened in the Fall of 2007, a few months after Nicolas Sarkozy won the presidential election. Sarkozy's campaign had been largely built on his proposed handling of the violence problems in the Paris suburbs. He became known for his intervention as Minister of the Interior during the 2005 *banlieue* riots during which he explained his intention to "nettoyer la cité au karcher," speaking of the La Courneuve projects. At the time of the CNHI opening, Sarkozy announced the opening of a "Ministère de l'Immigration et de l'Identité Nationale." Following this announcement, eight of the twelve academic board members of the CNHI walked away from the project. The main protagonist, Professor Gérard Noiriel who conceptualized the project of the Cité as early as 1989, published "A Quoi sert l'identité nationale?" in response to President Sarkozy's decision.

[64] Jody Blake "The Truth about the Colonies, 1931: Art indigène in Service of the Revolution" *Oxford Art Journal*, 25.1 2002 (41)

[65] Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin note in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*: "… [Negritude] adopted stereotypes which curiously reflected European prejudice. Black culture, it claimed, was emotional rather than rational; it stressed integration and wholeness over analysis and dissection; it operated by distinctive rhythmic and temporal principles, and so forth. Négritude also claimed a distinctive African view of time-space relationships, ethics, metaphysics, and an aesthetics which separated itself from the supposedly

'universal' values of European taste and style. The danger was that, as a result, it could easily be reincorporated into a European model in which it functioned only as the antithesis of the thesis of white supremacy, a new 'universal' paradigm." (21)

[66] "*La Revue*'s uniqueness lay also in its objective to cultivate minds that would produce cultural artifacts and aesthetics out of the sociocultural situation of blackness. In effect, *La Revue du Monde Noir* endeavored to inspire creative dialogue and the exchange of ideas between and among the African diaspora that would ultimately launch, at least as Paulette Nardal contends in "L'Eveil de la conscience de race chez les étudiants noirs" (1932), an authentic literary movement in the Francophone world." (Sharpley-Whiting 55)

[67] Gayatri Spivak in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* uses the term "gender-unspecified" to describe the Indian subaltern group as a whole in her discussion on the representation of the subaltern in Western intellectuals' works such as Foucault's or Deleuze and Guattari's: "For the (gender-unspecified) "true" subaltern group, whose identity is its difference, there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself; the intellectual's solution is not to abstain from representation. The problem is that the subject's itinerary has not been left traced so as to offer and object of seduction to the representing intellectual." (273)

[68] "The colored women living alone in the metropolis, until the Colonial Exhibition, have certainly been less favored than colored men who are content with a certain easy success. Long before the latter, they have felt the need of a racial solidarity which would not be merely material. They were thus aroused to race consciousness." (Nardal 347)

[69] "During the years from the 1920s to the early 1940s when a literature produced by colonial subjects is just beginning to constitute itself, the paratext serves to contain what is already understood to be its liberatory potential. However, a tension between symbolic containment and the authorization of a text that challenges colonial authority, sometimes simply by virtue of its existence, is also visible in the paratext from these years. In spite of its forceful displays of authority, the colonial paratext is a site of ambiguity and equivocation." (Watts 29)

[70] "It was, importantly, at the convivial Clamart salon that the idea for a monthly bilingual, multiracial collaborative review was conceived. Under the collective editorial management of the *soeurs* Nardal; Haitian scholar Léo Sajous, a specialist on Liberian issues; the bilingual Black American educator Clara Shepard; And Louis-Jean Finot, described in one police report as a dangerous Negrophile married to a black violoinist," *La Revue du Monde Noir* was launched in the fall of 1931" (Sharpley-Whiting 55)

[71] "Besides, it was natural that the Antilleans who are generally half castes of Negro and white descent, imbued with their Latin culture and ignorant of the history of the black race should in the end, return to the element that honored them most." (Nardal 344)

[72] *The New Negro: An Interpretation of Negro Life* was published as an anthology in 1925 and comprised, among others, the works of Alain Locke, Zora Neal Hurston, W.E.B. Du Bois and Langston Hughes, all architects and participants in the Harlem Renaissance movement of the 1930s, which was paralleled in France with the Negritude movement. Sharpley-Whiting writes about the resemblance of Nardal and Locke's argument: "Although race was a 'core' theme in these writings as a result of its use in constricting the lives of the writers, African American literature at this stage was not, for Nardal, a literature racialized in the defense or glorification of the Negro race, but a literature intended to appeal to the morality and ethics of whites regarding the inhumanity of slavery." (Sharpley-Whiting 71)

[73] Nardal wrote in "L'Eveil:" "Tout autre était la situation chez les noirs Américains. Bien qu'ils ne fussent pas, eux non plus, de race pure, le mépris systématique dont l'Amérique blanche a toujours fait preuve à leur égard, les a poussés à rechercher, au point de vue historique, culturel et social, des motifs de fierté dans leur passé de race noire. C'est ainsi que l'idée de race, par nécessité d'apporter une solution au problème racial qui se posa aux Etats-Unis dès l'abolition de l'esclavage, est devenue la dominante de leurs préoccupations" ("Quite different was the situation among the American Negroes. Though they are not of pure African origin either, the deliberate scorn with which they have always been treated by white Americans, incited them to seek for reasons for social and cultural pride in their African past. Because they were obliged, immediately after the abolition of slavery, to try to solve their difficult race problem, the race question became the keynote of their concerns" 344)
[74] "However, parallel to the isolated efforts above mentioned, the aspirations which were to be crystallized around "The Review of the Black World" asserted themselves among a group of Antillean women students in Paris … as they grew older, they became less strict, less ultra, since they have understood the relativity of all things. At present, their position is the middle ground." (Nardal 347-8)
[75] "A crucial link between the Nardal sisters' eclectic *Revue du Monde Noir* (1931-1932) and *L'Étudiant Noir* (1935-1936), which in turn helped stimulate the great *Tropiques* (1941-1945), the almost subterranean *Légitime Défense* played a part in promoting the new tremors in the black intellectual atmosphere. It challenged the colonialist status quo, provoked thought, fomented dreams, and liberated the imagination. By no means least, it inspired – via poetry as well as polemic – the spirit of refusal and active revolt. In the history of the Negritude movement no less than in the history of surrealism, this little magazine marks and epoch." (Rosemont 23)
[76] "Emerging from the French mulatto bourgeoisie, one of the most depressing things on earth, we declare that … we intend – as traitors to this class – to take this path of treason so far as possible. We spit on everything they love and venerate, on everything that gives them sustenance and joy." (Fijałkowski and Richardson 43)
[77] Nardal writes: "Cet émouvant contralto, chez qui l'intelligence ne cède jamais à l'émotion, éveilla chez son auditoire de Cambridge, des résonnances d'une qualité très fine. On félicita l'artiste, mais aussi la conférencière dont l'exposé n'avait pas été dépourvu d'humour" ("The stirring contralto, whose intelligence never once yielded to her emotion, aroused a delicately responsive chord in her audience at Cambridge. Her listeners congratulated her upon the objective and humorous treatment of her subject" 41).
[78] In addition, André Breton in *Martinique, charmeuse de serpents* described Suzanne Césaire as a "tropical Nadja" after his own imagined muse, Nadja, from the novel of the same name.
[79] "It is not at all about a backwards return, a resurrection of an African past that we have learned to know and respect. On the contrary, it is about the mobilization of every living strength brought together upon this earth where race is the result of the most unremitting intermixing; it is about becoming conscious of the incredible store of varied energies until now locked up within us. We must now deploy them to the maximum without deviation, without falsification. Too bad for those who consider us mere dreamers." (Walker 33)
[80] "Beyond these analyses and some dated interpretations one must imagine Suzanne Césaire happy to conquer her plant-woman Antillean-ness… Happy to pen her injunctions to write and to love, for herself, for her love, for her people … Happy to carry into writing the rhythm of her

anima, her feminine power, between love and humor in synchronicity that the superior man does not know how to do …" (Walker xxxiv)
[81] "In those days, her sun-filled beauty and power, visible in the sparkle of her eyes and the radiance of her hair, also revealed a fragility in her vine-like body, rarely still and never rested. A body given to fertile eruptions but devoured by an inner hell – of serious pleurisy that year – saved by a fourth, regenerative, pregnancy." (Walker xxvi)
[82] "My negritude is not a stone, its deafness hurled against the clamor of the day
my negritude is not a leukoma of dead liquid over the earth's dead eye
my negritude is neither tower nor cathedral
it takes root in the red flesh of the soil
it takes root in the ardent flesh of the sky
it breaks through opaque prostration with its upright patience." (Eshleman 67, 69)
[83] "In the same way, my notion just simply became the union ticket for essentialism. As to what is meant by strategy, no one wondered about that." (Danius and Jonnson 35)
[84] "It could not be more explicitly stated that negritude is neither a state nor a definite ensemble of vices and virtues or of intellectual and moral qualities, but rather a certain affective attitude towards the world." (MacCombie 36)
[85] "Often uneasy and fraught with innuendo, the dialogues between Sartre and black intellectuals in France reflected the social barriers excluding black intellectuals from the worlds of academia and high culture … By asking him to write the preface to the African and Malagasy poetry collection, Senghor acknowledged Sartre's philosophical prowess and contribution through creating a special space for him in the discourse of Negritude. Whether Sartre would have assumed this role anyway without an active collaboration with Senghor and Diop's group is open to speculation." (Jules-Rosette 273-4)
[86] "For the reader, who certainly pays less attention to the dates given on the flaps than to the look of the pictures themselves, a significant connection is irresistibly established not so much with the chronology of the book's composition as with the internal chronology of the narrative – that is the age of the hero. For the reader, therefore, these three pictures evoke at the same time the aging of Proust and the aging of the narrator-hero, thus inevitably drawing the *Recherche* toward the status of autobiography." (Lewin 31)
[87] Romain Gary wrote in *La Vie devant soi*: "J'avais une course à faire dans un grand magasin à l'Opéra et il y avait un cirque en vitrine pour que les parents viennent avec leurs mômes sans obligation de leur part … La vitrine était entourée d'étoiles plus grandes que nature qui s'allumaient et s'éteignaient comme on cligne de l'œil. Au milieu, il y avait le cirque avec les clowns et les cosmonautes qui allaient à la lune et revenaient en faisant des signes aux passants" ("I had some business in one of the department stores near the Opera, where they had a circus in the window, so parents could bring their kids with no obligation on their part… The window was framed in over-life-sized stars that lit up and went out as fast as you can blink. The circus was in the middle with clowns and cosmonauts that went to the moon and back, waving at passers-by" 93, Manheim 59). Calixthe Beyala wrote in *Le Petit prince de Belleville*: "J'accompagne M'am faire des courses dans les grands magasins à l'Opéra. Il y a un cirque en vitrine. Les parents viennent avec leurs mômes gratuitement. La vitrine est tout entourée d'étoiles plus grosses que nature. Elles s'allument, elles s'éteignent en un clin d'œil. Au milieu du cirque, il y a des cosmonautes. Ils vont jusqu'au ciel, ils reviennent sur terre en faisant des saluts aux passants." ("I go shopping with M'am in the department stores near the Opéra. There's a circus in the shop

windows. Parents come to look at it with their kids and it's free. The window is framed in stars that are bigger than in real life. They light up and go off in the twinkling of an eye. In the middle of the circus there are astronauts. They go all the way to heaven, come back to earth while they greet the passers-by." 122, de Jager 81)

[88] "After dusk, I would go the bathroom without my lamp and end up in total darkness. I was peeing hastily when the door, which did not have a lock, opened up suddenly, and a pot filled with excrements was thrown. It spilled all over me, and I couldn't believe it. A neighbor who had just moved in with her baby had not noticed me in the dark. She had thrown her shit at me. I yelled as loud as I could. The woman hurried to get me out of there. Soon enough, my mother arrived, visibly anxious. Before the empty pot on the ground and the smell emanating from my own self, she quickly understood. She yelled at the woman who kept on apologizing."

[89] "Forget about the lamp; time is running out…In almost total darkness I squatted over the tank…A shadowy figure made a rapid gesture, and a warm liquid drowned my face, flooding into my mouth. It smelt of pee. It was pee! I uttered a stifled cry. My Uncle Ali had just emptied his chamber pot right in my face! ...My mother and my sisters came running in, panic-stricken." (Wolf and Hargreaves 7-8)

[90] Mentioning a photograph of Burkina Faso-born colonial official Dim Delobsom, Watts explains: "By showing the indigenous ethnologist Dim Delobsom, who worked in the colonial administration in Ouagadougou, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), in a three-piece suit, the paratext simultaneously presents the difference of the author – "he is African" – and co-opts him into the colonial cause – "but he wears a suit"." (Watts 33)

[91] "Femme nue, femme obscure/ fruit mûr à la chair ferme, sombres extases/ du vin noir, bouche qui fait/ lyrique ma bouche/ Savane aux horizons purs, savane qui frémit/ aux caresses fervente du/ Vent d'Est/ Tamtam sculpté, tamtam tendu qui gronde/ sous les doigts du vainqueur/ Ta voix grave de contralto est le chant/ Spirituel de l'Aimée" ("Naked woman, black woman/ Firm-fleshed ripe fruit, somber raptures of black wine, mouth making lyrical my mouth/ Savannah stretching to clear horizons, savannah shuddering beneath the East Wind's eager caresses/ Carved tom-tom, taut tom-tom, muttering under the Conqueror's fingers/ Your solemn contralto voice is the spiritual song of the Beloved" 16, 253)

[92] "It is good to remind people that France has writers that are not lily white. In the end, Marie Ndiaye is a mixed-race French woman with a Senegalese father and mother from Burgundy." (Tahar Ben Jelloun in Dominic Thomas 141)

[93] In *Taking French Feminism to the Streets: Fadela Amara and the Rise of Ni Putes Ni Soumises*, a compilation of testimonies and interviews with Amara herself and other members of NPNS, Brittany Murray and Diane Perpish define the movement as follow: "In 2003, Fadela Amara founded Ni Putes Ni Soumises (NPNS, translated as "Neither Whores Nor Submissive"), a French feminist social movement that arose in the *banlieues*, or impoverished suburbs of Paris. Growing up in the *banlieues* as a child of Algerian immigrants, Amara became a fierce advocate for the underclass and was later appointed to a post in the French government headed by Nicolas Sarkozy. Led by Amara and devoted to obtaining equal rights and opportunities for everyone, NPNS is especially focused on improving conditions for Muslim immigrant women who often suffer from discrimination, violence, and repression." (Book Cover).

[94] "Samira Bellil, 31, French Muslim Who Wrote of Her Gang Rape." 2004. *New York Times*.

[95] Internet source: www.norahamdi.com.

[96] Nina Bouraoui received the Prix Inter in 1991 for her first novel *La Voyeuse inderdite*. She was awarded the prestigious Prix Renaudot for *Mes Mauvaises pensées* in 2005.
[97] "Retranchée derrière toutes sortes d'ouvertures, je regarde, j'ausculte, je dévisage pour rendre laid le sublime, sombre le soleil, banales les situations les plus complexes … je suis l'œil indiscret caché derrière vos enceintes, vos portes, vos trous de serrure afin de dérober un fragment de Vie qui ne m'appartiendra jamais!" ("Hidden behind all manner of openings, I look, sound out, stare, in order to make the sublime ugly, the sun dark, the most complex situations ordinary … I am the indiscreet eye hidden behind your enclosures, your doors, your keyholes, in order to unearth a fragment of Life which will never belong to me!" 15-16, 8)
[98] "Ma vie algérienne bat hors de la ville. Elle est à la mer, au désert, sous les montagnes de l'Atlas. Là, je m'efface enfin. Je deviens un corps sans type, sans langue, sans nationalité. Cette vie est sauvage. Elle est sans voix et sans visage" ("My Algerian heart beats outside of the city. It belongs to the sea and the desert at the foot of the Atlas Mountains. Here, my body is erased and becomes unrecognizable. I become a non-descript body, a body without language, without nationality. This life is brutal. It is voiceless and fearless" 11, 4).
[99] "My life is a secret. I am the only one who knows my desire. Here in Algeria I want to be a man, and I know why. It's my only certainty. It's my truth. To be a man in Algeria means becoming invisible. I will leave my body, my face, my voice. I will be on the side of power. Algeria is a man." (Salvodon and Gavarini 21)
[100] Wittig in her 1973 text asserted the disembodiment of the female gender and of the lesbian body in her deconstructed writing, in the Derridean post-structuralist tradition: "… une angoisse m/e prend de haut en bas, j/e hurle, j/e pleure, j/e te secoue, tu ne bouges pas, j/e t'appelle des noms les plus doux que j/e peux trouver, j'//embrasse tes poignets …" (69). Blasted apart, the authorial voice incarnated in the female body thus comes to reflect the multitude and diversity of voices composing the realm of female voices in French literature.
[101] "Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies." (309)
[102] "Throughout the painful ordeal, I have never seen a woman go through so many positions. Vertical, horizontal, on the floor, on her stomach, on her back, bruises on her face, drenched with sweat, hiding in the bathroom, in front of the sink, bleeding, open skull, gaping jaw, menacing, holding the iron hot plate coaster, wanting to defend herself, quickly lying down, holding on to the table legs, being dragged on the floor, a gaping hole in her hair, a large fistful of her locks in my father's hands, rage boiling inside, bleeding knees, begging, praying."
[103] "So that was her life. People can live that way without having it bother anyone, without having any of her contemporaries realize that her existence has so worthless, so inescapable, so nothing at all. She could die in this misunderstanding, die in general indifference, die in the idea that her and her peers will bow in servitude, again and again. Harsh realization."
[104] "La porte de la chambre de Chirine est entrouverte, je la regarde fixer son portable qui sonne. Elle le prend, regarde l'écran, l'éteint, le balance par terre. Elle lève les yeux sur moi, soutient pour la première fois depuis bien longtemps mon regard… Maintenant Chirine s'en veut de ne plus lui parler. Elle n'est pas dupe de sa propre faiblesse, sait qu'elle a accepté la dictature de la beauté. A compris comment ce pouvoir agissait sur les gens, sur elle…" ("Chirine's bedroom door is ajar, I can see her staring at the cell phone that is ringing. She grabs it, looks at the screen, turns it off and throws it across the floor. She looks at me and for the first time in ages, golds my gaze…Now Chirine feels bad for not talking to her anymore. She is not fooled by her

own weakness, she knows she accepted the dictatorship of beauty. She understood how this power affected other people, and her…" 199-200)

[105] "Was it her sister's fault if she represented everything she was running away from? Was it her fault if this girl of the same blood reminded her of all the things she had been constantly eliminating in her own self? These traits she tried to erase with the help of plastic surgery, numerous creams, diets, new manners of speaking, walking, thinking. Hiding under the most expensive clothes. No… it wasn't Lya's fault, but Chirine would rather become a stranger."

[106] "We are thus put on notice that what Mayotte wants is a kind of lactification. For, in a word, the race must be whitened; every woman in Martinique knows this, says it, repeats it. Whiten the race, save the race, but not in the sense that one might think: not "preserve the uniqueness of that part of the world in which they grew up," but make sure that it will be white." (47)

[107] Fanon writes about Mayotte Capécia: "Il semble en effet que pour elle le Blanc et le Noir représentent deux pôles d'un monde, pôles en lutter perpétuelle: véritable conception manichéiste du monde; le mot est jeté, il faut s'en souvenir – Blanc ou Noir, telle est la question. " (36)

[108] "Aujourd'hui l'abstraction n'est plus celle de la carte, du double, du miroir ou du concept. La simulation n'est plus celle d'un territoire, d'un être référentiel, d'une substance. Elle est la génération par les modèles d'un réel sans origine ni réalité: hyperréel. Le territoire ne précède plus la carte, ni ne lui survit. C'est désormais la carte qui précède le territoire et s'il fallait reprendre la fable, c'est aujourd'hui le territoire dont les lambeaux pourrissent lentement sur l'étendue de la carte. C'est le réel, et non la carte, dont les vestiges subsistent ça et là, dans les déserts qui ne sont plus ceux de l'Empire, mais le nôtre. *Le désert du réel lui-même*" ("Today abstraction is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory – *procession of simulacra* –that engenders the territory, and if one must return to the fable, today it is the territory whose shreds slowly rot across the extent of the map. It is the real, and not the map, whose vestiges persist here and there in the deserts that are no longer those of the Empire, but ours. *The desert of the real itself*' 10, 1)

[109] "The material feature that [the *dust jacket* or the *band*] have in common … is their detachable character, as if they were constitutively ephemeral, almost inviting the reader to get rid of them after they have fulfilled their function as poster and possibly as protection… most likely the paratextual messages that appear on the jacket and band are also meant to be transitory, to be forgotten after making their impression." (Lewin 27-8)

[110] "L'aliénation du spectateur au profit de l'objet contemplé (qui est le résultat de sa propre activité inconsciente) s'exprime ainsi: plus il contemple, moins il vit; plus il accepte de se reconnaître dans les images dominantes du besoin, moins il comprend sa propre existence et son propre désir. L'extériorité du spectacle par rapport à l'homme agissant apparaît en ce que ses propres gestes ne sont plus à lui, mais à un autre qui les lui représente. C'est pourquoi le spectateur ne se sent chez lui nulle part, car le spectacle est partout." (Debord 31)

[111] In "Ghosting: The Performance and Migration of Cinematic Gesture," Lesley Stern discusses the cathectic effect of cinematography and camera movement on the viewer, suggesting that the image and its movement as they are projected onto the screen affect the spectator so far as to cause bodily sensations and memories to be released in concordance with the cinematic

discourse: "The capacity of gesture to move can be located in the cathexis of energy, perceived as intensity and mimetically converted by the spectator. Images, gestures, do not mean the same thing twice, but by virtue of their intensity, they persist, triggering somatic memory and producing pathos." (202)
[112] Fatima El-Tayeb explains the term "postethnicity" in *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*: "It is one of my key assumptions that the transgressive approach to concepts of identity characteristic for the new minority activism I explore here is directly related to the specifics of the European situation: their common configuration as illegitimate and alien to the nation fosters cooperations between different racialized groups, making possible a "postethnic" understanding of identity that is not built around racial identification, but nevertheless challenges the European dogma of colorblindness by deconstructing processes of racialization *and* the ways in which these processes are made invisible." (xix)
[113] "In response…minority subjects use queer performance strategies in continuously rearranging the components of the supposedly stable but incompatible identities assigned to them by exploring their "impure, inauthentic, nonreproductive potential," creating cracks in the circular logic of normative European identities." (xxxv)
[114] Tarr adds: "Furthermore, the *beurs* continued to be scapegoats for majority French fears about unemployment, delinquency and drugs in France, as well as potentially being scapegoats for fears about AIDS. It would not be surprising, then, if representations of the *beurs* at this time returned to a rhetorical bid for integration through assimilation, by suppressing signs of difference." (51)
[115] "We wander in invisible corridors" - "this hole… one more shopping center, still no city center"
[116] The term "postethnic" as developed by Fatima El-Tayeb in *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* goes beyond the concept of multiculturalism: while multiculturalism entails the coexistence of several set ethnicities in the same social space (as demonstrated in Denis' *J'ai pas sommeil* – French, Martinican, Lithuanian), postethnicity is the result of the colorblindness and refusal to recognize within Europe these multiple ethnicities as valid, therefore enticing the development of a new global identity that is not based on postcolonial ethnic markers (black, white, African, Algerian...)
[117] "Claire Denis is working on a mode of enunciation dominated by the image, where there is little dialogue, and where the story progresses according to a fragmentary structure – fragments of what she terms the "unspoken" ["le non-dit"], which (one may realize sooner or later) belong to different pathways that form irregular, crisscrossing patterns (or filiations) within a carefully balanced narrative whole. This structure of fragments and filiation allows Denis to create what I call "narrative parentheses," in which music and sometimes dance seem to shift the narrative to another register, substituting for dialogue indirectly in a nonequivalent, nonreductive, and strongly expressive manner." (Bergstrom 71)
[118] "This enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, in which the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded…all this constitutes a compact model of the disciplinary mechanism." (*Discipline and Punish* 197)
[119] "The act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language or to the statements uttered. At the most elementary level, it has a triple "enunciative" function: it is a process of appropriation of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian …it is a spatial

acting-out of the place … and it implies relations among differentiated positions, that is, among pragmatic "contracts" in the form of movements" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 97)

[120] The RER trains in France link Paris to its suburbs, its "proche *banlieue*" and the two Parisian airports, Charles de Gaulle and Orly. They differ from metro trains, which only serve Paris intra-muros.

[121] *35 Rhums*' opening scene is a replica of Louis Malle's opening of *Zazie dans le métro*, a 1960 film adaptation of Raymond Queneau's original novel (1959). The novel and film relate the adventures of young Zazie in Paris, a modernist critique of the fragmentation of Parisian life, rendered possible by the metro, symbolic of rapid individual travel in the French capital.

[122] The Sacré-Coeur, rendered famous in the English-speaking world thanks to Jean-Pierre Jeunet's award-winning picture *Amélie* (2001), is a common landmark in African and Antillean literature of exile and appears most remarkably in Gisèle Pineau's *L'Exil selong Julia* (1996). In Pineau's narrative, the narrator (Pineau herself)'s grandmother Man Ya is moved by her family from Guadeloupe to the Paris suburbs in order for her to be in a safe and caring environment. From the apartment window she can see the Sacré-Coeur and one day decides to walk to the majestic church, for it is visible from many parts of the city. This way, she believes, she will not get lost.

[123] The French *banlieue* offers limited public spaces for interactions, which is why the café appears as a recurrent trope in narratives in immigration: it is one gathering place that does not discriminate, whether it is in Paris proper or in the *banlieue*. The café is a recurrent trope notably in Romain Gary's *La Vie devant soi*, Calixthe Beyala's *Le Petit prince de Belleville*, and Faïza Guène's *Du Rêve pour les oufs*.

[124] "I love my job, let me tell you… it's never the same! I am happy behind the wheel. I don't have a boss telling me what to do, I meet interesting people…"

[125] "The train threads its way through our history at an accelerated speed…Taking the subway would thus mean, in a certain way, celebrating the cult of the ancestors. But obviously this cult, if it exists, is unconscious; many station names say nothing to those who read or hear them, and those to whom they have something to say do not necessarily think of the thing when they pronounce the name. If there is a cult, one could say it is a dead cult: far from confronting society today with its past and the individuals that made it to their own history, subway trips disperse to the four corners of Paris men and women who are in a hurry or tired, dreaming of empty cars and deserted platforms, occupied by the urgency of their everyday life and spotting on the map they are consulting or the stations that go by nothing more than the more or less rapid flow of their individual duration, estimated only in terms of being ahead of or behind schedule." (Augé 17-18)

[126] "In fact, there was no "industrial revolution," but only a "dromocratic revolution;" there is no democracy, only dromocracy; there is no strategy, only dromology … It is *speed* as the nature of dromological progress that ruins progress; it is the permanence of the war of Time that creates total peace, *the peace of exhaustion*." (Virilio 69)

[127] "One can analyze the microbe-like… practices which an urbanistic system was supposed to administer or suppress, but which have outlined its decay; one can follow the swarming activity of these procedures that, far from being regulated and eliminated by panoptic administration, have reinforced themselves in proliferating illegitimacy, developed and insinuated themselves into the networks of surveillance … to the point of constituting… surreptitious creativities that are merely concealed by the frantic mechanisms and discourses of the observational

organization." (*The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Randall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

[128] In the context of French immigration, the term "cité" refers to a group of high-rise low cost housing buildings forming a specific "quartier" outside of Paris, whereas a "*banlieue*" by definition is a town that is located on the border of the main agglomeration but still under its cultural and financial influence (working-class communities live in the *banlieue*). The term "banlieue" is however also commonly used to describe the sites where the *bidonvilles* (shantytowns – where the first emigrant populations lived at the time of the post-World War II reconstruction effort) used to be (Fielder explains: "These new neighborhoods became known as *les banlieues,* since they are located *outside* the "urban periphery" in cities such as Paris, Lyon and Marseille, and today they are home to the majority of immigrant families living in France" 271). Puteaux is here described as "banlieue" not because of its immigrant population, but because of its geographical and working-class status.

[129] The La Défense business district is located at the intersection of Puteaux and Courbevoie, two *banlieue* towns separated from Neuilly by the Seine river. Two thirds of the La Défense business districts are located in Puteaux proper.

[130] In *Les Intouchables*, a wealthy Parisian paraplegic man hires a young French man of African descent from the *banlieue* to be his aide. The film focuses on their cultural and social differences, and the narrative unfolds to unveil an unexpected friendship. Olivier Nakache's 2011 film, based on a true story, received various prestigious prizes, including the French César for best actor (Omar Sy).

[131] *Les Uns et les autres* is a 1981 film by French director Claude Lelouche. While the main action takes place in Paris, some of the narratives start in Moscow and Berlin. The film's narratives span fifty years and two world wars, from the 1930s to the 1980s.

[132] "What is a film choral? Etymologically, it is a genre that borrows its definition from the musical form of the choir/chorus. Cinematographically, it is an oeuvre that distinguishes itself by two major characteristics: most of the protagonists become main characters, and their individual trajectories necessarily become entangled along the lines of a pre-established plan."

[133] "Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order." (*A Thousand Plateaus* 7)

[134] "Multiplicities are defined by the outside: by the abstract line, the line of flight or deterritorialization according to which they change in nature and connect with other multiplicities." (*ATP* 9)

[135] "We call a "plateau" any multiplicity connected to other multiplicities by superficial underground stems in such a way as to form or extend a rhizome…Each plateau can be read starting anywhere and can be related to any other plateau." (22)

[136] "Soit il [le spectateur] finit par rejeter ce à quoi je veux le faire participer, soit cet épuisement l'oblige à un questionnement, à une réflexion sur ce que raconte le film" (("Either he [the spectator] ends up rejecting what I want him to partake in, or this exhaustion forces him to question things, to reflect on what the film is about" Tonet 8)

[137] It is revealed later that Anna received an anonymous letter under her door telling her that someone on her floor is in danger of death. At first she believes her old neighbor wrote it to alert her of the violence perpetrated against the little girl. Both Anna and her neighbor eventually attend the little girl's funeral later in the film.

[138] The Prix Louis-Delluc itself is a prestigious prize started in 1937 and has been awarded to, among others, Jean Renoir, Jean Cocteau, Louis Malle, and François Truffaut.
[139] "I told myself this could be a fascinating experience, I wanted web users to be able to follow us, from the penniless beginning of this adventure, until its hypothetical success. So we created a Facebook community, we sent them funny videos explaining our project, introducing our participants, explaining our objectives."
[140] " Couples' stories are the only narratives I am truly interested in… I begin with those fascinating tales, I let them stew until I come up with a metaphor in fiction, until I appropriate them for myself as a screenwriter."
[141] "In reality, the activity of reading has on the contrary all the characteristics of a silent production: the drift across the page, the metamorphosis of the text effected by the wandering eyes of the reader, the improvisation and expectation of meanings inferred from a few words, leaps over written spaces in an ephemeral dance … The readable transforms itself into the memorable …This mutation makes the text habitable, like a rented apartment. It transforms another person's property into a space borrowed for a moment by a transient." (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xxi)
[142] " Psychogeography. The study of the specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals." (*The Situationnist International* 34)
[143] "I found myself with my script, and a demand: I wanted realism, I did not want my actors to be seen as reciting a written text, therefore I decided to never give them the scenario…never."
[144] *La Vie d'Adèle* won the 2013 Cannes Palme d'Or. The film is adapted from a popular comic book that recounts the encounter and ensuing love story of two teenage girls. After the Cannes film festival, actresses Léa Seydoux and Adèle Exarchopoulos have expressed their resentment for Kechiche's extreme methods in the press, leading to a controversy regarding Kechiche's methods as a director.
[145] "As for the film maker, the moment he has secured this unwitting complicity of the public, he is increasingly tempted to ignore reality. From habit to laziness he reaches the point when he himself is no longer able to tell where lies begin or end." (27)
[146] "Classical editing … separated reality into successive shots which were just a series of wither logical or subjective points of view of an event … the camera of Orson Welles takes in with equal sharpness the whole field of vision contained simultaneously within the dramatic field." (28)
[147] "… the law that I propose to call the law of the amalgam. It is not the absence of professional actors that is, historically, the hallmark of social realism nor of the Italian film. Rather, it is specifically the rejection of the star concept and the casual mixing of professionals and of those who just act occasionally. It is important to avoid casting the professional in the role for which he is known." (23)
[148] "So we need something to tame the bewildered herd, and that something is this new revolution in the art of democracy: the manufacture of consent. The media, the schools, and popular culture have to be divided. For the political class and the decision makers they have to provide them some tolerable sense of reality, although they have to instill the proper beliefs… The rest of the bewildered herd basically just have to be distracted … Make sure they remain at most spectators of action." (18-9)

[149] "It's also necessary to completely falsify history. That's another way to overcome these sickly inhibitions, to make it look as if when we attack and destroy somebody we're really protecting and defending ourselves against major aggressors and monsters and so on … Pick the topic you like: the Middle East, international terrorism, Central America, whatever it is – the picture of the world that's presented to the public has only the remotest relation to reality. The truth of the matter is built is buried under edifice after edifice of lies upon lies." (35-7)
[150] "Le monde a quand même fait le Tout-Monde. Les langues et les cultures, les civilisations, les peuples se sont quand même rencontrés, fracassés, mutuellement embellis et fécondés, souvent sans le savoir ou le manifester" ("Nevertheless, the world created the *Tout-Monde*. Languages, cultures, civilizations and people have met after all, they have shattered each other, embellished each other and reproduced, sometimes without realising or advertising it" 9)
[151] "The crisis was that large segments of the population were becoming organized and active and trying to participate in the political arena. Here we come back to these two conceptions of democracy. By the dictionary definition, that's an *advance* in democracy. By the prevailing conception that's a *problem*, a crisis that has to be overcome. The population has to be driven back to the apathy, obedience and passivity that is their proper state. We therefore have to do something to overcome the crisis. Efforts were made to achieve that. It hasn't worked. The crisis of democracy is still alive and well, fortunately, but not very effective in changing policy. But it is effective in changing opinion, contrary to what a lot of people believe." (33)
[152] "… Josephine's costume was restricted to a golden version of her banana skirt, this time studded with rhinestones and with the bananas curved cheekily upward instead of hanging like a bunch. In this act, she led the entire company in dancing the Charleston." (Wood 109)
[153] "Conversely, the film's final scene points to assimilation gone awry, as a lovelorn, grown-up Zouzou, clad in a few strategically placed Ostrich feathers and swinging from a perch in a giant birdcage, performs before an adoring music-hall audience her signature song, "Haïti," a mournful tribute to lost happiness." (Ezra 101)
[154] "Of the 1,428 films produced by the Lumière brothers, 1,408 have been found and restored, among which 900 have been taken from the original nitrate negatives. About 30 are on European anthropozoological topics. Nearly 100 others were filmed in the French colonies (Indochina, the French Antilles, and French North Africa, with the exception of Morocco) but not in Sub-Saharan Africa … With colonial expansion and the progress made in techniques of filming, from the beginning or the twentieth century, the same operators moved out from the zoos to film 'on location'." (127)
[155] "In a move which converted lack of self-consciousness to lack of awareness, there emerged the cliché of the overgrown child and brave rifleman so dear to the colonial vision … By intruding into 'uncivilized worlds', the movie camera, that tool of modernity, increased the rate at which they were disappearing. By fixing them on film, by archiving them, it allowed them, subsequently, to be tamed." (129)
[156] "I move slowly in the world, accustomed now to seek no longer for upheaval. I progress by crawling. And already I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am *fixed* … I feel, I see in those white faces that it is not a new man who has come in, but a new kind of man, a new genus. Why, it's a Negro!" (116)
[157] "Mais là-bas, juste à contre-pente, je bute, et l'autre, par gestes, attitudes, regards, me fixe, dans le sens où l'on fixe une préparation par un colorant. Je m'emportai, exigeai une explication… Rien n'y fit. J'explosai. Voici les menus morceaux par un autre moi réunis" ("But

just as I reached the other side, I stumbled, and the movements, the attitudes, the glances of the other fixed me there, in the sense in which a chemical solution is fixed by a dye. I was indignant; I demanded an explanation. Nothing happened. I burst apart. Now the fragments have been put together again by another self." 88, 109)

[158] " "Sale nègre!" ou simplement: "Tiens, un nègre!" J'arrivais dans le monde, soucieux de faire lever un sens aux choses, mon âme pleine du désir d'être à l'origine du monde, et voici que je me découvrais objet au milieu d'autres objets" (" "Dirty nigger!" Or simply, "Look, a Negro!" I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects" 109)

[159] "Were Macaulay, Wedderburn, and the representatives of the African Institution to have won their case, Baartman was to have been repatriated, "liberated" to a Cape colony that was once again under British rule, where she would have been subjected like all KhoiSan people, to the "special protection of the British government" and where Africans were still in bondage and would remain so through the 1834-1838 period of emancipation." (82)

[160] "One can wonder. Why isn't she revolting? She is not forced to act in the spectacle, nor is she free to decide. It probably is a lesser evil. Had she stayed in South Africa, she would have been a slave for people who would have treated her even worse. She was able to think that one day she would conquer her own image, play the violin and be the artist she dreamt to become."

[161] "Faced with a lack of material infrastructures, artists turned to the immaterial, to discursive spaces they could control and fashion without major monetary interventions and spatial considerations: journals and newspapers … [the discursive museum] served as a materially invisible but theoretically profound reconsideration of modern art in Moroccan society by suspending, repositioning, dissecting, and re-presenting dominant narratives." (92)

[162] "In the short term we will build the Migration Museum through a range of exhibitions and events to be held throughout the country in concert with a systematic education programme that will contribute to the British public debate about migration and change attitudes. Public understanding that our shared history is a history of migration will open up conversations and discussions about Britishness and belonging in a way that polarized media and political debate will never be able to do" Migration Museum Project Report 1.

[163] < http://www.migrationmuseum.org>

[164] <http://www.mbam.qc.ca/collections/archeologie-cultures-du-monde>

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